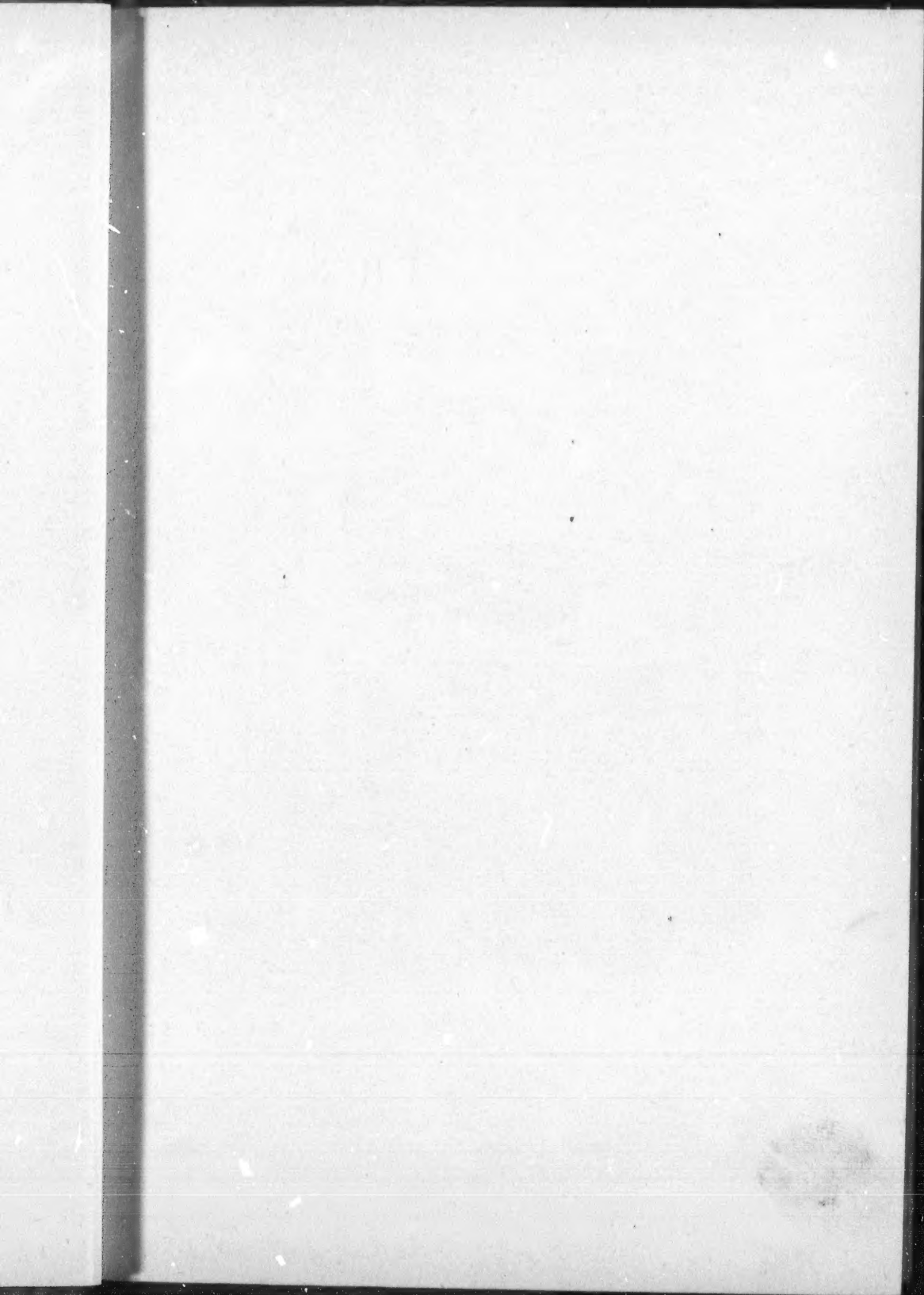


ETCHINGS

FROM A

PARSONAGE VERANDA







THE VERANDA.

7

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FROM A

PARSONAGE VERANDA

BY

MRS. E. JEFFERS GRAHAM.

Illustrated by J. W. BENGOUGH.



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PREFACE.

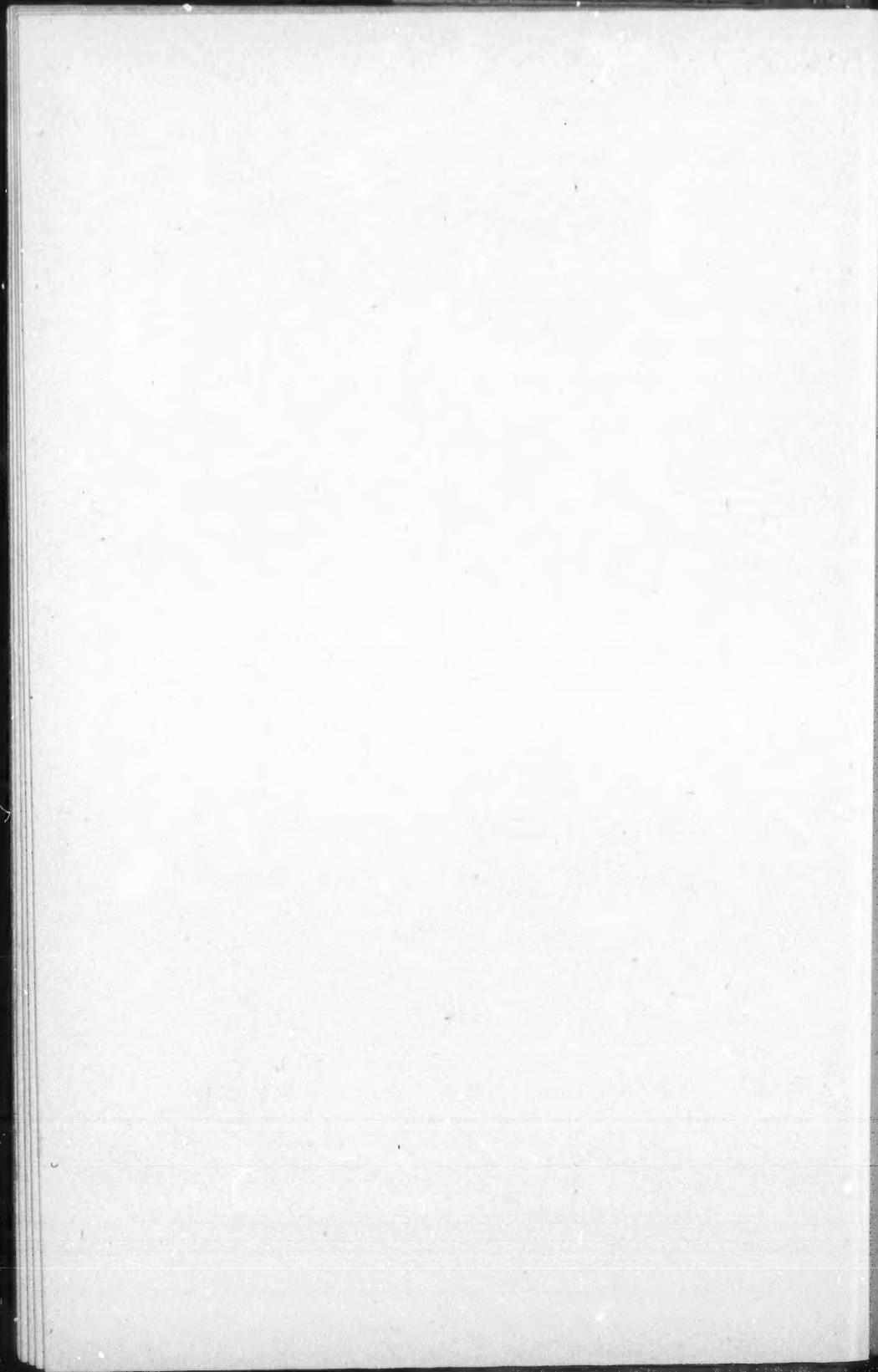
THE variety incident to the life of a minister brings him in contact with people of every description. He lives in the midst of stirring, thrilling events. Tragedy and comedy follow each other in quick succession. He cannot live a conventional life. He must rejoice with the joyful and weep with the sorrowful. He must be all things to all men. His wife shares his labors. It is her delight to be his helper, to hold up his hands, to make his home bright.

In these sketches I have avoided the darker experiences of parsonage life. There is so much that is bright and beautiful that I have preferred to write in the sunshine, under God's smile.

In these glimpses of shine and shade from the life of Catherine Wiseacre, I know I am but reproducing what has happened in many other lives.

We know that Truth is often stranger, sadder and sweeter than Fiction.

E. J. G.



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ETCHINGS FROM A PARSONAGE VERANDA.

The Parsonage.

THE parsonage is an old house, so old that the wind whistles and moans and sighs through the many cracks and crevices in its sides and corners.

If at any time you feel too warm, you have only to sit near one of its closed windows, and tiny ripples of air will refresh you. This is pleasant in summer, but when the thermometer marks ten degrees below zero, you begin to ask for what purpose the house was built in this fashion.

One stormy night I lay wondering if the builder was as "loose" in character as his work. I felt a curiosity to see him, hoping to find a reason why, for twenty years, the poor parson has had to endure the effect of his make-up. I felt sure that he was built upon the sand—that his mental clothes hung by one button, or were tied up with a string. I felt sure that his wife was a slave, having constantly to pick up after him and listen to his chronic grumblings. I was also afraid that his children would "take after" him, and continue to build loose, shaky houses and say weak, wretched things, till the end of time.

I woke Solomon and asked him why such men were allowed to live. He answered in a deep, drowsy voice, "Who made you a judge of the poor fellow? Go to sleep, or *you* will do some 'loose' building to-morrow."

So reproved I fell asleep, in spite of rattling windows and shaky walls.

There is one bright spot, however, about this old house. It is the wide, old-fashioned veranda, which stretches across its front and redeems it from complete ugliness. It was an after-thought. The "loose" man who built the house did not tender, or, public confidence being shaken, he did not get the work.

I have an old chair, cushioned and fitted up for a tired or lazy person. Here I spend my leisure hours in the warm weather. Here I sew, knit, and etch.

I see so many people come and go, to and from the town—I hear so many things, good and evil—that I cannot help making small sketches. They are only small, for how can I, Catherine Wiseacre, do a great thing? but such as they are I give them to you, dear reader.

Rev. Solomon Wiseacre.

HE is my husband. He is just now coming from the Post-office, bringing home his mail; and, as greedily as a school-girl devours chocolates, so eagerly does Solomon devour the news.

I should as soon think of taking Carlo by the ears when he is gnawing a succulent bone, as to ask Solomon for a dollar when he is in the depths of his paper.

“Poor, foolish man!” I exclaim, as he comes up the steps of the veranda, a pleased, expectant look on his face, and a goodly bundle of papers and letters in his hands. “If I came to you, bearing Freddie, our son, asking

only the small favor that I be relieved for an hour from his cries and kickings, would you take him with that placid smile on your brow—would you? Yet we are worth more to you than ten thousand mails."

I did not say this to him, but to myself only. I have learned not to say *all* I think.

He comes and sits by me, opens his paper, and reads so intently that his mouth falls open and the tip of his tongue appears. His eyes are large and comprehensive—he is getting *intoxicated* with news.

Then an imp, a very small one, takes possession of me. I say, in a dry voice,



REV. SOLOMON WISEACRE.



CATHERINE WISEACRE.

“Solomon, I think you will have to whip Arthur; he told a lie to-day.”

He moves uneasily in his chair, and jerks his shoulders.

I ask again, “Solomon, do you not hear me?”

“Why, in the name of wonder, Catherine, did you not whip him yourself?”

He always calls me “Catherine” when he is sad or cross, but “Katie” when he is in his honeymoon state.

“I thought it was a father’s work to whip the boys,” I answer. “That was the way papa used to do.”

"Now I know"—a suspicious twinkle in his eye—"why you are such a watery, unstable character. Your mother should have handed you over to your father. Desperate diseases need heroic treatment."

I snatch his paper from him and throw it on the lawn; his *Guardian* I twist into a knot; his letters I whirl up on the house, where they each stick lovingly to the old, rough shingles, and I return to my chair.

Solomon goes away with a sad, preoccupied air, which means "thorns in the flesh," "patience," "despair," and many other Christian states and graces.

I have not yet etched Solomon.

In bodily presence he is not the counterpart of St. Paul, and mentally he is of good stature. He is strong, true, and brave. Many women reverence him, and listen to his sermons; some are made better by them. Young

men look upon him as a friend, and confide to him their hopes and discouragements.

He is a wise man, not saying one year that which he will have to retract the next. He has a strong will. Some men have called him "stubborn." I do not like that word; it applies to mules rather than to men.

He is strong to resist what he considers evil, is true to God, to himself, and the world. I know when the time comes for Solomon to leave this world, the gate of heaven will open wide to let him in.

N.B.—After I had written these good things about him, I heard a voice as of some one pleading. I ran round the house, and—alas, for my sketch! there was Solomon, forcing Arthur up on the roof of the house to get his letters. Arthur is seven years old, and a coward. He begged to be excused, but his

father, in a solemn, determined voice, declared that "Mamma must have intended him to go, when she threw the letters there."

Arthur climbed the ladder with fear and trembling, crawled over the shingles, and threw the letters, one by one, on the grass. As he was coming back to the ladder his foot slipped, and he came sliding and screaming down the roof, then, with a yell of despair, he fell—into his father's arms.

I want to say, in conclusion, I do not think Solomon is perfect. He has traces of the carnal mind, and shows, at times, a disposition to win which does not savor of that sweetness which should mark "the perfect man."

Two Women.

ONE day I sat in my old chair on the veranda. I was mending Nellie's apron, which she had torn while fighting with Arthur concerning the ownership of some fishing-tackle. It was a large rent, and I was bending all my energies to its repair.

What wonderful things we women weave into the patches and darns of our children's clothes! So much of our time—I mean, so much of the time of ordinary women—is spent in mending broken garments, that if anything worthy the name of “idea” ever visits us, it must be then. I wonder if we know how readable we are, as we sew and knit.

I was out "pastoral calling" with Solomon one day. We came to the house of Mr. Smith, one of our members. With him his widowed sister makes her home. I begged her not to stop sewing, as I knew she earned her living by dressmaking; so she left the machine and began to work some button-holes.

As I sat by her she told me her history. She had been one of a large family, and had married her "first chance." Her husband wrought hard for years, but, in an evil hour, signed a note for a friend, and lost everything. He died soon after and left her alone—with nothing. I knew from her unhappy eyes and compressed lips that she had not lived happily with him. As her needle flew to and fro her mind was constantly going over every event of her married life.

I was not surprised when she exclaimed:

"If I had only been kinder to him! I can never forgive myself!"

She knows now, in the loneliness of widowhood, that her husband was her best friend. She remembers his kindness, while his rough storminess is forgotten.

She has not even the refuge of his having been a drunkard. There would then have been some excuse for her sharp words. No, she must carry that burden—the burden of her failure as a wife—and never, till she meets her husband in another world, can she ask his forgiveness.

She may have bent over his body and called ever so loudly, but he did not answer. She may have laid her face against his dead face and cried in agony, "Speak, only one word!" but the man who had wrought so hard to make her a home, and failed, was dead.

What mistakes we women make!

How we chase after marriage as though it would bring us something wonderful; and when we are married, how we fail to meet its requirements. We hold lightly our husband's love, while we become wildly rapturous over a bit of fancy work. We think not often of the tired man who is toiling all day in office, shop or field; but we give many thoughts to our hats and dresses.

We ask Mrs. Lighthead, "How is your husband?" and she answers, "He is not very well, I think; he works too hard. I am always scolding him for it." Then she adds:

"How do you like my new bonnet? I was so fortunate. Mrs. La Mode had partly sold it, but I offered her a dollar more and got it."

A few years later and the Mrs. Lightheads find themselves widows, with nothing to remember but the neglect and shallowness of their wifedom.

It is a dark and bitter day when a man wakes from his dream of happiness and comfort to see that his wife only looked on him as "a chance," and married for the profit she could make from his labor. I do not wonder that men become drunkards, embezzlers and suicides, or that they turn into mere money-makers at any cost!

Solomon and I often go to see an old couple who live in a cottage in the eastern part of the town. Their children have all left them for homes of their own. They are not wealthy, for they have done well by their boys and girls. They have kept enough for their own comfort and are contented and happy. They have loved one another through a long married life, spending the most of their time together, working, talking and worshipping.

Solomon and I often take tea with them. The place of places I love to go is "Father

Moody's." I can do just what I like. I always take my work, and while the old man and Solomon read their papers, Mrs Moody and I work and talk.

How much I learn, sitting at her feet! What a history I read as her needles click and snap! How they speak of her energy and thrift, of her conquest in all the battles of her life!

When I see how neatly she is rounding the heel, how carefully she counts her stitches, I know that the true, steadfast love of her heart is knit into that sock. I know, when her husband dies, though her heart may break, she will have no despairing wailings over weakness and cruelty—only a calm waiting for the touch of the angel's hand, coming to bid her go to him again.

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I was startled to see two tears fall. Solomon, who was sitting near me, said :

“Katie, I have been watching you for fifteen minutes. You have had twenty different expressions in that time, and the finale is two big tears. What does it mean?”

“Oh,” I answered, “if, when I grow old, I find I have not done right, that I have wasted my life and”—

Solomon looked grave.

“That is a serious thought! Suppose you make some biscuit for tea, then we will take the children for a drive.”

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I made my biscuit, and in the cool of the day, as we drove home, God talked to us in the questions the children asked concerning the heavens and the earth. This is a wonderful universe, but the most wonderful of all God’s handiwork is a little child.

They asked many questions which Solomon, though he is a wise man, could not answer.

That night, as I tucked them in their beds and kissed them, I heard God's good-night to me: "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein."

As I buried my head in my own pillow, the vexed question of the day became clear. If I am as a little child in faith, I shall not greatly err. As sleep fell on me, His words came like far-off music: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not."

Surely God's "Royal Household Guards" are the children.

Marion Fuller.

I DRESSED myself with care one afternoon, for a young lady was coming to take tea with us.

I arranged all the draperies in my little parlor with fresh effects; I put flowers in the vases, and made a cake.

Marion Fuller was a favorite with both Solomon and myself. Once a month she spent the afternoon with us. She was an accomplished girl, with sceptical tendencies. I think that was one reason I grew to love her. In listening to her doubtings I lived over again my own. She and I talked much with each other.

That afternoon, as I seated her in the parlor, in the best chair, she said, "Mrs. Wiseacre, let us sit on the veranda; it is so pleasant there."

"Come," I answered, "I am of the same mind."

A few minutes later found us busy with our work. The women of our church were going to hold a "bazaar," and all the spare time of all the female members was employed in concocting useful and useless articles for that event.

I was putting some elaborate stitches in a mat, while Marion wrought patiently on a table-cover. It was a beautiful day. Not a cloud was to be seen, except a few fleecy ones, which relieved the intensity of the blue sky. The sun shone gloriously on the earth. The robins and sparrows were singing merrily over our heads in the old maple trees. I could

hear the laughter and shouting of merry children at their play.

“What a happy thing life is on such a day!” I exclaimed.

Even as I said this a man appeared.

“Only man is vile,” added Marion.

Up the street came that strangest of all maniacs—a drunkard! When he drew near he took off his hat, made a low bow, then fell against a tree-box.

“Mornin’, ladish.”

We did not speak.

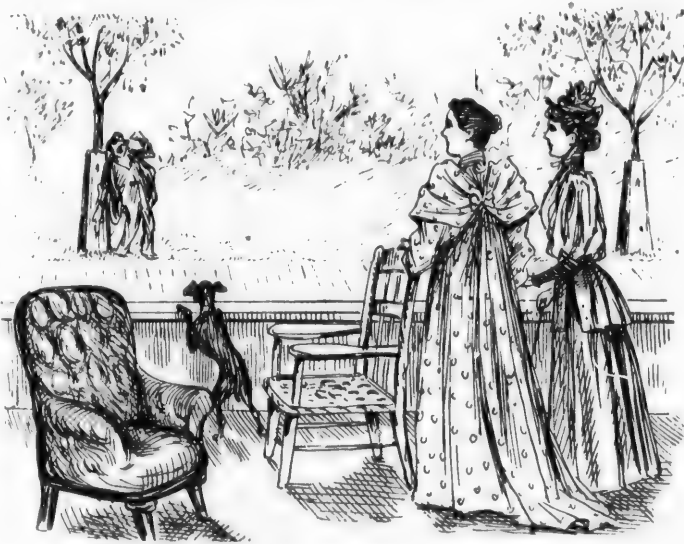
“I all’us s’lute—ladish—when I see ’m,” he said, with a thick utterance. “The Sun’s havin’ a—ball—to-day, ladish. I’m to take the Moon out to supper—hic. Good-bye, ladish—hic. All’us s’lute ladish when I see ’m. Very sorry, ’m sure—hic.” And he staggered on.

Neither of us spoke for several minutes.

We stitched in silence, until, glancing at Marion, I saw that she was deadly pale.

"Are you ill, my dear?" I asked.

"Did you not know, Mrs. Wiseacre, that



my brother Tom is no better than that poor fellow?"

"No, Marion, I did not. Is he not at home?"

"He has not been for several years," she

answered. "Papa turned him away. That is the cause of mamma's heart trouble. Oh, Mrs. Wiseacre, what a terrible curse the liquor traffic is!"

"Curse!" I exclaimed; "that is too mild an expression."

"Yet," Marion said, "it has always been so. Men have always made it, and rejoiced in it."

"They will continue to do so, my dear. This evil began in the Garden of Eden. It is closely related to the juice of the forbidden fruit."

"You are not joking?" asked Marion.

"No, my dear," I answered. "Even as Satan planted the craving for forbidden things in human nature—things which are pleasant to the taste, and which make men and women wise concerning evil—even so shall not this taste be eradicated unless He who is to bruise

the serpent's head come in power and set man free."

"Many Christians believe it to be a good thing. I should not have thought it wrong to drink moderately if Tom had not become such a slave to it. Now I see the evil."

"I should like to know more about your brother," I said; "that is, if you care to tell me."

"There is not much to tell," she answered. "Father will not allow him to come home. We dare not mention his name, and mother is wearing her life away. Once in awhile we hear of him, but he is always drinking, and sinking lower and lower."

She threw her work away, and began to walk up and down the veranda.

"Can nothing be done for him, Mrs. Wiseacre?"

I shook my head. "Why did you not



TOM FULLER.

tell me of this before?" I asked.

"I was ashamed," dropping her head sadly. "We never talk of him to anyone."

"Where is he now, Marion?"

"He is in Albion, in a lawyer's office. He is clever, if he would not drink; but he is going to destruction, and I am powerless to save him!"

We sat in silence. The sun still shone, but there was a lurking shadow. The birds still sang, but there was a minor note in the music. The children still shouted and played, but I shuddered when I thought that some of those little boys were beginning their race to destruction.

Tom Fuller going to ruin, and we powerless

to save him! Father, mother, sister, friends, looking helplessly on as he drifts away—away into the darkness of eternal night!

“If I had the power,” said Marion, “I would close every distillery; I would pour out on the ground every drop of the horrible stuff. When I see Mrs. Macbeth, the distiller’s wife, driving past with her white horses, I feel like telling her what a fearful price has been paid for them.”

“Ah, my child.” I replied, “she would answer, ‘If your brother drinks to excess, it is not my fault.’ She would tell you that her husband’s business is lawful, and she has as good right to use the profits of it as you have to clothe yourself with the profits of your father’s business. It is because you suffer that you feel so bitterly against these people. I, like you, do not envy them their luxuries, for I also know the price paid for

them ; but I have learned to judge righteous judgment. I know there are many good women whose husbands and fathers do not think of the effects of the traffic. They look upon the business as lawful, and therefore right."

"But can nothing be done, Mrs. Wiseacre. Why does not every Christian, seeing the evil, act? I sometimes think they are all asleep, or that they do not care."

"A great many Christians, Marion, *are* as you *were*. They do not think it any harm to drink moderately, while we, who eschew it utterly, receive more than our share of the world's scorn. There is a glimmer of hope for the world: young people are putting on the armour. They have heard the call of Christ, and have risen to answer. Even women are waking from their sleep of centuries to see that there is much to be done if

this world is to be rescued from the power of evil. Yes, my dear, it will take all God's children, men and women, to do the work. You cannot escape, Marion. You have something to do ; you must save your brother."

"How? Tell me how the work is to be done," she said, clasping her hands.

"I do not know now," I answered. "You and I must ask God about it. I am certain of one thing—He has not decreed that your brother shall be lost, and lost he must not be."

I kissed her and went to get tea, wondering, as I laid the plates on the table, when—when in the history of this world men were going to rise and put this evil from the earth.

Jacob Whinely.

HE is one of the pillars of Solomon's church. He is class-leader, local-preacher and steward. His daughters are pretty, silly girls, and his boys are fast. None of them belong to the church.

His wife is neither silly nor fast. She looks as though all the life she ever possessed was crushed out of her. She is *one* who listens to Solomon's sermons, and is made better by them.

I have been told by several of the old people that she was the prettiest girl in the town; that she had several offers, but took Jacob Whinely because he was a Christian.

I do not think it was a profitable investment, as her life has been one strained effort to keep in his good graces. He is constantly shaking ruin and starvation like a red rag before her mental eyes. She has been for thirty years working and saving to keep up the family.

The children do not share the fears of their parents. They believe in taking care of themselves. They are shrewder than their mother, and know that their father is not poor and is not likely to go to the poorhouse, as he delights to tell them when they ask for money.

Mrs. Whinely is very thin. Her eyes have a hunted look, and she finds it hard to sit still. She is constantly thinking of something that



MRS. WHINELY.

has to be done. The magnetic, tyrannical, merciless spirit of her husband is always goading her to action. I find myself constantly wishing that she may outlive him, so that she may have a rest before death comes to end her weary existence.

Jacob Whinely came to see us yesterday. Solomon calls him "brother," but as I do not want to be his sister, I call him "Mr. Whinely."

Solomon brought him to the veranda, where I was sewing. After talking about the weather for several minutes, he said: "Brother Wiseacre, I came to see you to-day about a matter that has been on my mind for some time. I need not tell you that I have made it a subject of prayer."

Solomon looked keenly at him.

"What is it, brother Whinely?"

"The state of the church—it is not what it

ought to be. I suppose you have seen yourself that the church is going down."

"No," said Solomon, "I have not noticed."

"The congregations are not what they were



two years ago. I've come to the conclusion that your sermons are too long, and—I might as well be plain—too dry. They do not draw a crowd, and as a consequence our collections

are smaller. The stewards find it hard to keep up the running expenses of the church."

"I did not know that," said Solomon, seriously.

"If you would shorten your sermons, and put more taking matter in them, I think the congregations would improve."

"Will you show me *how*?" asked Solomon.

"Well," he answered, "brother Brown used to preach on special subjects. One Sunday he would take 'Jonah and the whale,' another time it would be 'Lot's wife.' He gave catching names to his sermons, and the crowd came to hear what he had to say."

"I don't care for these things," said Solomon. "I prefer to preach in my own way."

"Well, it amounts to this: if the funds go down we'll have to keep them up out of our own pockets. I can tell you the times is too

hard for that. Some of us 'll have to go to the poorhouse."

Then he turned to me. "I've been thinkin', sister Wiseacre, if you was more spiritool-minded you'd be a help to your husband."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Why, sister Brown used to get up in the meetin's and talk—sort o' preach. It done a wonderful lot o' good. People came to hear her, and the meetin's were terrible lively."

"I'll do it," I said, "if you will pay me a salary."

"A salary!" he shouted. "Ain't you your husband's help-meet?"

"I am his wife, but I was never ordained a minister. You see I am as mercenary and heartless as yourself. You want money, so do I."

"You should be willing to work for souls, ma'am," he said sternly.

“So I am, but I find it all I can do to bring my children up in the way they should go. I should be heart-broken if they were not Christians.”

“Don’t you believe in doing anything for the church?”

“Oh, yes, I am working for the church all my leisure time, in a quiet way; but I could not preach—I have not the ability.”

“No,” he said, “there are very few women gifted as sister Brown was.”

Solomon had risen. There was a dangerous look in his eye.

“Brother Whinely, who authorized you to come here and talk to us in this way?”

“I authorized myself,” he said. “I came as one of the Church of Christ who does not want to see the cause go down, and”—

“You need go no further,” Solomon said. “I do not thank you for your impertinence,

and I hope you'll never repeat it. I am not afraid of you, brother Whinely, nor of any other creature. I must continue to preach the Gospel in my own way."

When he had gone I said to Solomon, "That man will do you harm."

"I am not afraid," he answered. "He has no more influence with the public than he has in his own family."

That night a young man came to see Solomon. He wanted to be a Christian. The sermon last Sunday night had decided him. They talked with each other for several hours, and I heard their voices in prayer. How I wished that Jacob Whinely could have been there. I suppose he was busy explaining to his wife the stern necessity of greater economy, so that they would not have to go to the poorhouse.

Carlo.

WE have a dog. He came to us a very young puppy. He is Arthur's ideal of all that is desirable in a dog.

I have not yet felt him to be an unmixed blessing. He is addicted to many vices. He has swallowed everything he could lay his paws on, from darning-needles to dollar bills. He has stolen meat from the table, and has even thrust his head in the oven on thievish thoughts intent. He has bitten several tramps. He has even attacked the rector and the banker. In the latter cases I think the dog was deceived. The expression on the faces of these two men is not unlike that on

the faces of the tramps. There is the same look of destiny, of stern resolve. With the former it means duty and service; with the latter it refers to their next meal and lodging.

Carlo, being a dog, makes no nice distinctions, but attacks all with equal impartiality.

He often goes on adventurous expeditions across the country, from which he returns in a demoralized and muddy condition. His place of rest, after these fatiguing pleasures, has generally been the parlor sofa or the spare bed.

He sympathizes with Solomon in his belief that there is no place of repose so restful as a feather bed. I find him often luxuriating on my best "shams," or cuddled up on my china-silk cushions in the parlor.

I have talked to Solomon about Carlo's destruction. I must confess I have thought of his early demise in a singularly resigned, if not joyful, frame of mind.

I have consulted several druggists concerning the most painless way of putting him out of the world. I have scolded Solomon for not doing it—have called him weak and morbid; yet the dog still lives.

I have offered him, as a gift, to several children and men. I grew eloquent concerning his good qualities one morning to the milkman. I told him Carlo would be invaluable to him as a watch-dog. I told him he would feel perfectly safe if the dog guarded his house.

But he looked wise, and said, "If ye think him such an awful good critter why don't ye keep him yerself?"

The last time I tried to get rid of him was on this wise: I hailed a small boy, and told him how nice it would be to have a little dog of his own. He brought a piece of meat one day, and coaxed Carlo away with him. I told

him to shut the dog up for a few days, feed him well, and he would have no trouble.

That night Arthur hunted the streets for his dog, but he could not be found. He was going sadly to bed, when Nellie suggested that they pray for his restoration. My conscience smote me when I heard them earnestly pleading for Carlo's return.

Before they rose from their knees, there came a familiar scratching, scratching on the hall-door. Arthur scampered wildly downstairs, and in a short minute he had the dog in his arms, and was bestowing more fervent embraces on him than he ever had on Solomon or me. Carlo returned his affection with many lickings, while Arthur declared his strong faith in God for answering his prayer so quickly.

I felt so guilty that I resolved to forever give up trying to get rid of him. I even

determined to look for his virtues and ignore his vices.

In this I have partially succeeded, though I have occasional relapses, when he attempts to masticate my best handkerchiefs and burglarizes the pantry.

Sitting alone one night in my old chair, Carlo came and licked my hand, then laid down at my feet.

"Poor doggie," I said, as I patted him, "some time I may know what design there was in your creation. At present you are one of the unsolved mysteries."

After a few minutes Arthur came out. He had finished his lessons, and wanted to say good-night. He sat down by the dog.

"Mamma, did you ever see such a beauty as Carlo?"

"Yes, my dear, I think I have."

"No," he said, "there never was such a dear, dear doggie."

"Arthur, I think you love that dog better than anything else."

"Not more than you and papa, and Nellie



and Freddie; but I do love him an awful lot. Say, mother, when I am a missionary I am going to take Carlo with me wherever I go."

"A missionary, Arthur?"

"Yes," he said, "when Carlo came back that night I promised God to be a missionary, and I'm going to be one."

"Arthur, come here, I want to tell you something. I do not think I have been a friend to Carlo."

"Yes, you have, mother; you have fed him and taken care of him all the time."

"No, Arthur," I said, "I have hated him all the time; I have tried to get rid of him."

He looked sorely puzzled, then a smile lighted up his face.

"You must have been—oh, what's that word women say—*nervish*."

"Nervous?" I asked. "I think I was, but I'm not going to be again."

He kissed me and went to bed.

I looked away into the future. I saw a young man sitting in a bungalow, studying a foreign language. At his feet lay an old dog.

Dusky men came and sat around him, while he taught them from his book.

Again, I saw this young man going from house to house, praying with the sick, or teaching the ignorant. Always with him went the old dog. Then I saw him dig a grave under a palm tree, I saw him put the dead body of his faithful friend in, and reverently cover it. When he had finished, he sat down and wept bitterly.

I knelt on the floor of the veranda and took Carlo's head between my hands. "Carlo," I whispered, "I've buried the hatchet, but you must cultivate honesty. Honors await you of which at present you are not worthy."

A Pensioner.

SOLOMON has been ill—not dangerously, but enough to make him quiet for a few days. He had been visiting typhoid parishioners, and caught the infection.

Dr. Strange said that typhoid fever is not infectious. He and I had a small fight about it. He said that Solomon was “bilious, and so—so”—

“Caught it,” I added.

I believe typhoid microbes are not only flying around with their aunts, uncles and cousins—the scarlet, yellow and malarial microbes—seeking whom they may devour,

but they are also willing and eager to be transferred from one victim to another.

It was Dr. Strange's skill and strategy which prevented the ruthless invaders from taking possession of Solomon. When we are strong, how easy and pleasant it is to make merry at the expense of the doctor, but when the microbes appear the doctor is victorious.

When the headache and fever left him, Solomon began to worry about his work for the next Sunday. I had given him a drink and arranged his pillows, when he said, "I do not know where I shall find a 'supply.'"

He had sent for the three local preachers belonging to our church, but they had, with one consent, refused. One said he was too old; another had heard that the people laughed at his bad syntax and Devonshire dialect. The third was troubled with "doubts"; he was getting sceptical, he told

us, about the prophecies—had been reading an article in an agnostic review, which ridiculed the Christian belief concerning them. He felt that it would be dishonest to preach while he thought as he did.

Agnostics profess to know nothing, and I think they live up to their profession. Better the visions of the prophets, which have been fulfilled in history, than their know-nothingism. I only thought this, I did not say it.

Solomon sighed when the man went away.

"You may write to Father Price, Katie," he said, "he will not fail me; he is not troubled with doubts."

He was an old superannuated minister who lived in Bolton, a neighboring town. I wrote, and received this reply on a post-card:

"DEAR SISTER,—Sorry that Brother W—— is sick. Will be with you (D.V.) on Saturday evening.

"JOHN PRICE."

He came, as he had promised, by the evening train. Solomon was lying on the study lounge, and I drew a chair by its side for Father Price.

"Well, brother Wiseacre," he said, "I've come, for I find it hard to refuse an invitation to preach; but I am getting old, and I usually feel very weary after my day's work is done."

"Take it easy, brother Price," said Solomon; "give them a quiet little talk on some familiar theme."

"That reminds me," said the good man, "I do not know what subject to fix on. I have been trying to collect my thoughts all day. I have been waiting on a sick wife for two weeks, and it unfits one for study. I have had a feeling that God has some special message for me to carry to this people."

Solomon put his hand on his head and closed his eyes.

"My head is rather weak to-day. Katie, can you suggest anything?"

I brought the Bible from the desk and opened it at the twelfth chapter of St. John and the forty-first verse:

"These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him."

"Why do you want me to preach from this text?" he asked.

"I want you," I answered, "to prove that the prophets meant Jesus the son of Mary when they wrote; that they saw as in a vision His coming, and spoke of it,"

"Well, I'll try; but you must give me the Concordance. My memory is getting poor, and there are so many passages to prove it."

I found them, while he marked chapter and verse on a card. Then we went to tea. The children talked to him about their play, and he told them about his boy life, until it

seemed to us that we had known him for years.

What a strange power these men of God have to reach the hearts of old and young—a power which has made our Church what it is.

The next morning Solomon's head was so bad that I did not hear the sermon.

Father Price seemed dejected when, after dinner, he sat down in my old chair on the veranda.

I had drawn the study blind and left my patient sleeping. Noise and talking disturbed him; so I took a book from the shelves and went out to sit with my guest.

"I had a hard time this morning," he said. "I think I should have chosen my own subject. I seemed to be contending with some power all the way."

"Sister Wiseacre," he continued, "I have lately been the subject of a strong temptation.

In looking back on my past ministerial life, I see that I have had a hard time. I hadn't a College education as the young fellows are getting now, and I was always sent to work up some circuit that was run to the ground. I have never been given a station that was in good shape. I have never had fair sailing."

"Do you not think it was an honor," I asked, "to be sent to such circuits? A weakling would only have buried the cause. You must have been a strong man or your brethren would not have chosen you for difficult work. I have yet to learn that the church has *any* soft-cushioned seats for her servants."

He did not heed me, but went on :

"I had nothing but myself to give the church. My parents were poor, and I married my wife because I loved her."

"Brave man !" I thought.

"I have always had small salaries and given my full share to the funds. I have brought up and settled three children, and now in my old age I am poor, very poor."

"You have your superannuation income," I suggested.

"Yes," he answered, "but I hear that some of them grudge us even that."

"No, no!" I cried; "I have never yet heard an intelligent, liberal man or woman breathe such an idea. They know that you, like the Queen's men, cannot make money, only your yearly pittance, so they pension you just as the Government does its worn-out soldiers. The pension is your well-earned right."

"When I think," he went on, "of all we've come through, all the sickness and expense and hard work, I don't know how I could have done it, only my wife was such a good manager. She has literally worn herself out

for the church. This is my temptation. We have given our strength, our all, and have nothing but crumbs in our old age."

I wondered if Solomon would think so when he grew old.

"I don't believe you have reached 'Beulah land,'" I said.

"Why, sister Wiseacre?"

"When Christian reached 'Beulah land' he caught sight of the 'Celestial City,' which filled him with great joy. When he thought of all the steep hills and pitfalls he had climbed and escaped, he praised God. You are not sorry that you gave your life to this work?"

"No, thank God!" he cried; "I would do it again if I had my life to live over."

"Would you marry for love if you were young again?"

"Yes, yes."

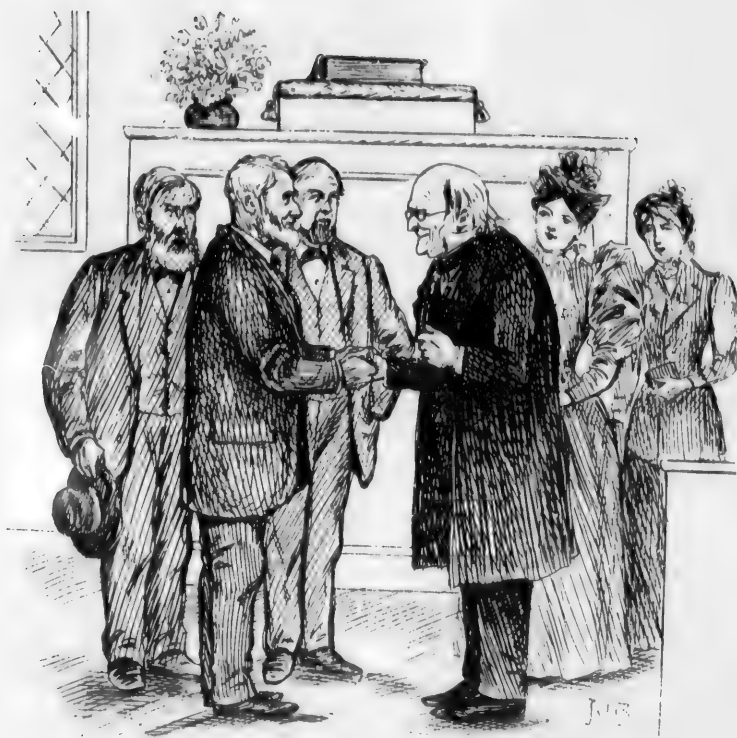
"Then," I said, "open your eyes; you've

reached the land of corn and wine. Never again say that you are old and poor and neglected ; you are one of the richest, wisest and best men I have ever seen."

I heard Solomon calling me, so I left him to study his evening sermon.

I went to the service that night, and liked our preacher's plain, practical words. Many stayed to the prayer-meeting, and when fifteen minutes were given for anyone to speak, the man whose faith in the prophets was shaken rose to his feet.

" My friends," he said, " I have been in doubt for some months, and, I need not tell you, in darkness, too. I have been very unhappy, for I was losing faith in the Divinity of Christ. This morning I came to church cast down by the doubts which pressed so heavily on my soul. Thank God, the sermon cleared them away. I wonder now why I



FATHER PRICE.

ever doubted. I have been happy all day, and I praise God that He sent His servant to preach to us."

After a few minutes a man in one of the back pews said :

"I suppose brother Price does not know me, but I know him. Thirty years ago, at a meeting he held on the Bethel Circuit, I gave my heart to God. I expect to clasp his hand in heaven when he will have received his reward for all the good he has done on the earth. May God bless him."

Father Price began to sing,

"I've reached the land of corn and wine."

When he came to the words, "For all my night has passed away," he broke down and shouted, "Glory!" while happy tears rolled down his cheeks.

Then I knew the temptation had fled, and angels were ministering unto him.

Mrs. Taffety.

I WAS sitting in my usual seat one afternoon, when a lady came up the walk. I rose to meet her, but she said :

“Do not rise, Mrs. Wiseacre ; I am younger than you. I have come to talk to you about this bazaar. I know you have experience, being a minister’s wife, and so much older than I.”

I bade her sit down, and asked, “What do you wish to consult me about ? ”

“Ch, everything. I am so afraid there is going to be trouble. Mrs. Willmott is so heady. She wants everything her own way. She actually wants to have the choicest

articles on her table, and has chosen Marion Fuller as her assistant. She always does the same thing—always makes trouble.”

“Do you think she intends to make trouble?” I asked.

“I don’t know what she *intends* to do, I only know what she *does*. I want you to speak to her about it, Mrs. Wiseacre; you have such a talent for speaking plainly to people, and you are so much older and more experienced than I am.”

“Oh, dear,” I said, “you take my breath away. I am very fond of Mrs. Willmott. I should not like to wound her.”

“Yes,” she replied, “everyone knows that you make a pet of her. I think it is your duty to tell her that, if she persists in appropriating everything, she will get the church into serious trouble.”

“But,” I said, “she has given more money

and time than anyone else. I know she is doing it to help the church, not for her own pleasure."

"I knew," Mrs. Taffety cried, "that you would not go against her. Do you think it is right to show such partiality, being a minister's wife?"

"I would not listen to any gossip about you," I said; "why should I listen to any about Mrs. Willmott?"

"I should hope that no one *could* gossip about *me*. I have not done anything to be talked about."

"Neither has Mrs. Willmott," I answered; "let us work in a charitable spirit, it will be more pleasant."

"I see you won't help me," she said, angrily. "I might have known; but I thought, being a minister's wife and so much older, that you would."

She rose to go.

"There is no fool, Mrs. Taffety," I said, "so foolish as an old one. Put my action in this matter to the credit of my old age."

Not many minutes later I saw Mrs. Willmott coming. I ran to meet her, and put her in my chair.

"This is an honor, indeed," she said, smiling. "Do you know, Mrs. Wiseacre, that a storm is brewing?"

"Where," I asked, "in the physical or moral sky?"

"Ah," she answered, "I see you know something about it. I do not know why, but there are several women who do not like me. They never have, and I am sure they never will. I have resolved to give up working for the church."

"You must not say that," I cried; "the church cannot spare you."

"Oh, yes it can," she said, "I am not at all conceited about my poor little deeds. My father has been quite sick. I think I shall take this time to go and see him. I just want you to know why I am not here."

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The bazaar was held the next week. I was busy at one of the tables, when I heard Mrs. Taffety wondering where Mrs. Willmott had gone. She confided to her friend that she "believed" Mrs. Wiseacre had made mischief. She had come to me, as the minister's wife, and being so much older than she, and had asked me to keep Mrs. Willmott from taking all the best things for her table. She added, "I believe she has told her everything I said, for Mrs. Willmott was seen going there after I came away. I think that is great work for a minister's wife."

I suddenly appeared before her.

“Dear me, Mrs. Wiseacre, were you there?”

“Yes,” I answered, “I heard all your words. Let me assure you, Mrs. Taffety, that you are quite mistaken. Neither Mrs. Willmott nor myself mentioned your name.”

The bazaar was very successful. The proceeds paid for our organ. Mrs. Taffety was a ruling spirit, and had everything her own way, which saved the church much trouble.

Mrs. Willmott came home after her father's death. She helped us with her money, she gave to every good work; but her voice was not heard again in our meetings. I do not wonder that St. Paul said :

“The greatest of these is Charity.”

The Knight and the Dove.

ONE evening we were sitting on the veranda—Nellie, Arthur, Freddie and the children who had been playing in the yard with them. They were tired, for they had been indulging in the time-honored game of “Tag,” and now were sitting and lying around me.

Freddie had crept into my lap and snuggled a sleepy head under my chin.

“Mrs. Wiseacre, tell us a story,” said Bobbie Jones.

“A fairy story!” cried Minnie Willmott.

“Sumpin’ ’bout a horse,” murmured Freddie in a far-away tone; “a gate big b’ack horse,

what's got a white 'tar on his face, yike my papa's."

"Children," I said, "I've told you all the stories, fairy and real, that I have ever heard or read. I wonder what you think I am? Do you suppose I can make them?"

"Can't you think of just one little story, mamma?" asked Nellie. "Something you read when you were a little girl."

A short silence followed, during which I searched my memory diligently.

"I do remember one," I said, "but it is not very exciting. Boys, if you would like to go you may."

"No, no, let us stay!" they all cried.

Solomon brought a basket of apples which Mrs. Moody had sent, and put it at my feet.

"Now, children," I said, "you must chew very quietly or the Fairy will fly away."

"All right, we're ready," said Arthur.

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“Once upon a time, hundreds of years ago, there lived a knight whose name was Sir Launcelot. He was a brave man, and often fought for his master, the king.”

“Had he a gate big b’ack horse?” whispered Freddie, dreamily, “with—white ’tar—on—face? You’ll tell me—after—won’t you, mamma—if horse—had—white—’tar—on”—

Freddie was asleep.

“He had a beautiful wife, the Lady Godiva, who was so much beloved by the poor that they called her ‘The Angel Lady.’ She was not only loved by her people, but even the lower animals, the birds and insects loved her. She would not allow her servants to kill flies, spiders or any other little creatures which found their way into the castle. She gave directions that they should remove them gently, so that their legs or wings might not be injured.



SIR LAUNCELOT.

“When her sister, the haughty Lady Ferinda, laughed scornfully at what she called her ‘folly,’ Lady Godiva answered: ‘What right have we to destroy creatures that are smaller and weaker than ourselves. They harm us not; why should we be cruel to them?’

“When the hounds were wounded in the chase she visited their kennels daily, often feeding them with her own hand, until they were sound again.

“All the horses in the stables knew her voice and whinnied when she drew near, for she always carried in her hand comfits or bits of sugar, which horses dearly love. When she rode through the village on her white palfrey, the little children crowded around her, hoping that a smile or a gentle pat of her hand might fall on them. The hard, rough men, who toiled all day that they might

have food for their wives and children, blessed her. In times of sickness *she* was the good angel who brought wine and broth, who placed her cool hand on their fevered brows and breathed a prayer for their recovery.

“ Old Dame Crocker declared there was a halo of light around her head. She could see it sometimes, though her eyes were old and dim.

“ Good, jolly Friar Monckton laughed and said that she was guarded by angels; the glistening of their wings caused the light which Dame Crocker saw.

“ When a little boy appeared one morning at the castle, great was the rejoicing. Huge bonfires were built on all the hills surrounding the lands of the knight. Oxen were roasted whole, and the peasantry were feasted. Sir Launcelot bestowed many gifts on the poor as a thanksgiving for a son and heir.

“The baby grew to be a fine boy. He was named Hugh, and promised to be brave like his father. Often he longed for the time when he could wear armor, buckle on his sword, and fight for the king.

“The Lady Godiva loved her boy, but in her heart she sighed for a little daughter. One day an angel left a little creature at the castle, a girl—so tiny, so pretty, so sweet, that the servants wondered as they gazed on her. Sir Launcelot took her in his big hands, kissed her, and said to the Lady Godiva, ‘She is from heaven. Thou mayest call her what thou wilt, I name her “Love.”’

“When she was a few months old she was christened Elfrida, after her grandmother; but her father kept his word. There were no bonfires built, no public rejoicings, as when her brother was born, yet she was very dear to her father and mother. Daily the Lady

Godiva carried her little daughter in her bosom, played with her, or soothed her when she cried. As she grew older she was taught to love everything, as her mother had done.

“One day they were sitting in the Lady Godiva’s bower. Elfrida was putting some new stitches in her sampler, while her mother wrought on a woollen petticoat for Dame Crocker, who had the rheumatics.

“‘My mother,’ said Elfrida, ‘thou hast ever taught me to be merciful. Must I be kind even to Jeremy Stokesby and Dame Marlebone?’

“Her mother smiled. ‘Even these, my child. If thou wouldst make this earth a heaven, thou must love—love always and ever. ’Tis hatred that causes blood to flow, that makes the widow’s tears to fall, and fills this fair earth with darkness and woe.’

“‘Mother,’ said the girl, ‘my father fights;

he loves war as thou lovest peace. Why is it so ?’

“ ‘It is because of the king’s enemies, my child. There are men who would take our country from us, drive our good king from his throne, and usurp his place. It is to defend us from our enemies that thy brave father fights.’

“ ‘Why do those men, my mother, hate our king and wish to get our lands for their own ? Why do not all people love, as thou dost ?’

“ ‘Ah, my Elfrida, it is because of one great act of rebellion which took place some thousands of years ago. I will ask the good father to instruct thee concerning it.

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“ Sir Launcelot had been summoned to join his king. Word had been received that ships laden with men, well armed with bows and battle-axes, were on their way to Albion, the

beautiful island-country where Sir Launcelot lived, and over which the king ruled. Couriers were sent in every direction to summon all the knights, squires and yeomen to defend their homes and the throne of their king.

“Sir Launcelot had confessed—had embraced his wife, and promised his son that in the next war he should bear sword and battle-axe.

“Elfrida stood with her mother and the maids, and watched the train go forth. The horses pawed the ground, impatient of restraint, the trumpeter gave the signal for starting, yet the knight lingered.

“He spoke to one of the squires, who went to Elfrida.

“‘Thy father would speak with thee, come.’

“She ran across the court, stepped lightly on the hand of the squire, and was lifted by her father to a seat on the saddle.

“ ‘I would have a last word from thee, Love,’ he said. ‘Thy father is loth to leave thee and thy mother, twin angels of my life.’

“ ‘My father,’ whispered Elfrida, ‘I would have thee fight for the king, but not kill—not kill.’

“ ‘What is this sword for but to kill, little one?’ he asked, smiling. ‘Our enemies have axes, and use them, so must we. But come, put thine arms around my neck, child, and wish me “Good-speed.” ’

“ ‘My father, my father, I cannot let thee go!’ sobbed Elfrida. ‘An arrow may pierce thee, the cruel axe may hew thee down, and my mother will die. Oh, my father, leave us not; we love thee!’

“Tears stood in the eyes of Sir Launcelot as he pressed the maiden to his heart. ‘God keep thee, little one, and thy sweet mother.

My life would be as nothing, if I had not the light of thine eyes to guide me. Come, take this kiss to thy mother. Tell her, if I fall in battle, the thought of her and thee shall cheer my last hours.'

"The squire lifted her to the ground and the cavalcade wound out of the castle gates, over the draw-bridge, through the great park, until finally it disappeared from view.

"The Lady Godiva went to her chamber to pray for the success of the king's army and the speedy return of her husband. Elfrida went into the garden and sat down under an old oak tree. She was very sad. She could think of nothing but her father's last words. A great longing filled her heart to go with him, to be near him in danger. Suddenly the branches of the tree shook, the leaves rustled, and a tiny old woman appeared. She was such a funny little creature that Elfrida felt like

laughing at her. She was so kind, however, that she only asked if she could do anything for her.

“‘No, dearie,’ the old woman said, ‘but I can do something for thee. How wouldst



thou like to follow thy father, to be near him until he returns?’

“‘How canst thou cause me to follow my father?’ asked Elfrida.

“‘I am the Fairy of this old tree; I have

lived in it hundreds of years. I guard thee and thine from harm. I may not leave the tree, but seest thou yonder dove? I will put thy spirit in it and send it forth to follow Sir Launcelot. Wilt thou that I do this thing?'

" 'What shall my mother do till I return?' asked Elfrida.

" 'I will speak to her and comfort her,' said the Fairy.

" Elfrida sighed: 'I would follow my father.'

" Instantly a deep sleep fell on her. Another instant the snow-white dove, which had been sitting on a branch of the tree, flapped its wings, sailed away over the trees of the forest, and was lost to sight.

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" Sir Launcelot and his men had ridden hard for many miles, then stopped at an

hostelry for refreshment. When the horses had rested, they continued their march to the king's camp. As they were about to start, a dove appeared over their heads, stopped, fluttered its wings, then perched on Sir Launcelot's shoulder.

“‘One of the doves!’ he cried. ‘Thou canst not go with me to the war. Fly back to thy mistress and peace.’

“He took the dove in his hand to throw it from him, but it laid its head against his cheek and cooed :

“‘Brave Sir Knight,
To the fight
I would go—go—go.’

“‘By my soul, I believe it spoke,’ he said, ‘and its eyes are like Elfrida’s.’

“‘Nay,’ answered the squire, ‘thou hast just parted from the maiden and thinkest but of her. Let the dove go with us, Sir Knight,

'twill be a solace—'twill speak to thee of the
maid and her mother.'

" 'I will rest
On thy breast,
Let me go—go—go.'

cooed the dove.

" 'By St. Peter! but it *did* speak,' asserted
the knight. 'Thou shalt go with us, pretty
dove; mayhap thou wilt bring victory.'

" When the Lady Godiva had finished her
prayers, she sought Elfrida. One of the maids
said she saw her weeping under the oak tree.
Her mother hastened to the garden and found
her child fast asleep. She called her maids
and they carried her to the castle and laid her
on a couch in her mother's chamber.

" The day passed, the night wore away,
another day dawned, yet her eyelids were
still sealed in slumber.

“The leech and friar were called. They looked at the child and shook their heads. The leech said a trance had fallen on her—he could do nothing. The friar said an evil spirit had possession of the child. He ordered many prayers to be said. He himself came daily to exorcise the spirit. Still she slept.

“One day the Lady Godiva sat by her little daughter. Her face was troubled and sad, her eyelids were red and swollen with weeping.

“The door opened softly and the Fairy of the Oak Tree stood before her.

“‘Weep not, lady,’ she said, ‘the spirit of thy child has gone to the war. Her body will sleep till her return. Weep not.’

“Lady Godiva stared at the little brown woman, who nodded her head and swayed to and fro like the branches of a tree.

“‘Do not weep,
The child doth sleep;
When thirty morns do break,
She shall awake.’

“The Fairy touched Lady Godiva gently with a wand, that looked like a twig of the oak tree, then went out as softly as she had entered.

“The tired mother fell asleep by the side of her child. When she awoke her trouble was gone, her face was happy—she had learned to trust.

“One day a great battle was to be fought between the king’s army and the invaders.

“The king had a son named Dagobert, who was taller and stronger than any other man in the king’s country. He was also very handsome and very brave. He was the pride and hope of his father, for, when he died, Dagobert would be king.

“ On the morning of the battle Sir Launcelot was summoned to the tent of the king. He went, bearing the dove on his shoulder, for night and day it was near him.

“ ‘ Sir Launcelot, I have sent for thee, because I know thou art a brave man. I know thou wouldst lay down thy life for thy king.’

“ ‘ Thou speakest truly,’ he answered. ‘ What danger threatens thee ? ’

“ ‘ ‘Tis not the king, but the prince, who is in danger. He will thrust himself in the front of battle. I have sent for thee to ask, if thou seest the battle wax hot around him, thou wilt go to his help.’

“ ‘ I will give my life to save his,’ answered the brave knight.

“ ‘ Go then,’ commanded the king. ‘ God keep thee and him ! ’

“ Many hours the battle raged. The enemy

were strong and fierce. Their leader, a huge giant, cut down many of the king's followers.

"In the heat of battle, the knight lost sight of the prince. One of his yeomen ran to him crying, 'The prince! the prince! he is surrounded!'

"Sir Launcelot drove his horse over dead and dying bodies until he reached the prince. The giant had his axe raised to hew him down, when the dove suddenly dashed into his face and beat its wings against his eyes, which so confused and blinded him that the axe fell from his hand. Sir Launcelot then despatched him with his sword.

"When they found their leader was dead the enemy fled to the sea-shore, pursued by the victors, who had no mercy on them.

"Thus the war was over and the prince was saved.

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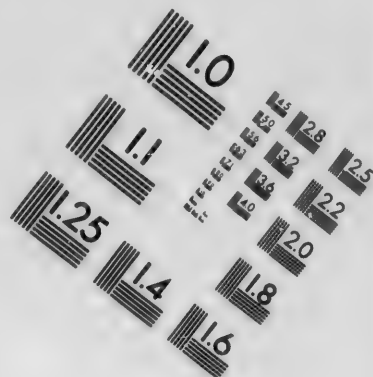
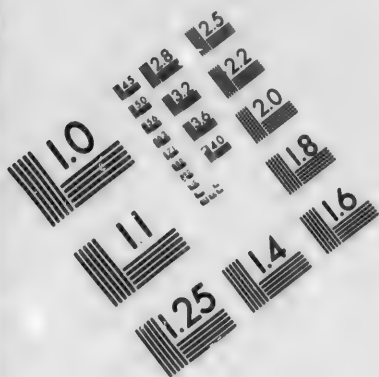
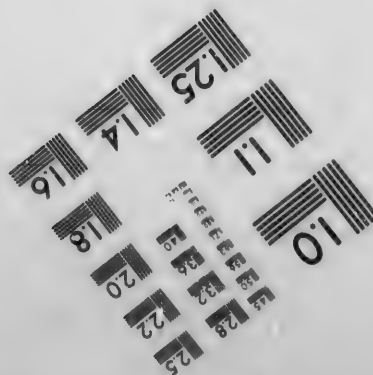
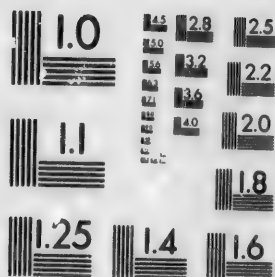


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“One day the Lady Godiva sat in her chamber by the side of the sleeping Elfrida. Every day—all day long—she sat and waited. She did not forget the words of the fairy :

“ ‘When thirty morns do break
She shall awake.’

This was the thirtieth day that Elfrida had slept.

“She arose and went to her chamber window, straining her eyes to catch a glimpse of some messenger who mayhap might come with tidings of the war.

“She heard the blast of a trumpet. Nearer and nearer came the sound of horses’ feet and the clanking of armor, until she saw through the trees of the forest the coming of Sir Launcelot.

“Then one of the doves that she thought dead flew swiftly toward the castle and entered her chamber window.

“Elfrida rose from her bed and clasped her mother’s hand.

“‘Child,’ said her mother, ‘thou hast slept since thy father went away.’

“‘I am glad to come back to thee, mother. My father returns ; let us go and meet him.’

“When the drawbridge was let down and the great castle gates opened, Sir Launcelot entered. The Lady Godiva wept tears of joy because on the same day both husband and child were given back to her.

“Sir Launcelot made a great feast, to which he invited many guests. Minstrels sang praises of the man who had saved the life of the prince and slain the enemy with his sword ; but the knight and many of his yeomen knew that it was the little snow-white dove that had won the victory and brought peace to the land.

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“Several years after, the young Prince Dagobert paid a visit to Sir Launcelot. He could not forget the man who had saved his life. He was received in great state by the noble knight and his beautiful wife. When Elfrida was brought before the prince, his heart went out to her. He could not keep his eyes from her lovely face.

“The next day he told Sir Launcelot that ‘ne’er had woman showed such grace.’ He asked her hand in marriage, and the father promised, if Elfrida’s heart went out to him, he should wed her.

“Prince Dagobert sought and found her in her mother’s bower.

“‘Fair Elfrida,’ he said, taking her hand, ‘wouldst thou like to be a queen some day?’

“‘Nay,’ she answered, ‘I love not so much pomp.’

“‘Wilt thou, then, be my wife?’

“ ‘Yea, I will be thy wife,’ she said.

“After two years the lovely Elfrida was taken to the king’s palace, where she and the prince were married. The sun never shone on fairer bride or braver prince. They lived together ever after so happily that when Dagobert became king and Elfrida queen, it came to be a proverb among their people, ‘As happy as the king and queen.’

.
“Now, children,” I said, “you may go home. Sometime I want you to tell me what you think of my story.”

“I know what I think of it now,” said Bobbie Jones. “I look upon Elfrida as a sham, a fraud. She pretended to be so gentle, so good, yet she caused the death of the giant and many of his men. *That* is ruling by love, isn’t it?”

“It was right,” said Minnie Willmott.

"She saw that the enemy had to be fought and killed, or her father and the prince would be slain."

"I like your story," said thoughtful Jack Newton, the rector's son; "it shows that we *must* fight to defend ourselves. It shows, too, how beautiful love makes everything. Thank you for your story, Mrs. Wiseacre."

"Good-night, dear children, good-night."

A Cross.

ONE afternoon I put on my bonnet and went to Mr. Fuller's office. He had a lumber-yard in the suburbs of the town. His office was in one corner of the yard.

"Are you alone?" I asked, as he opened the office door.

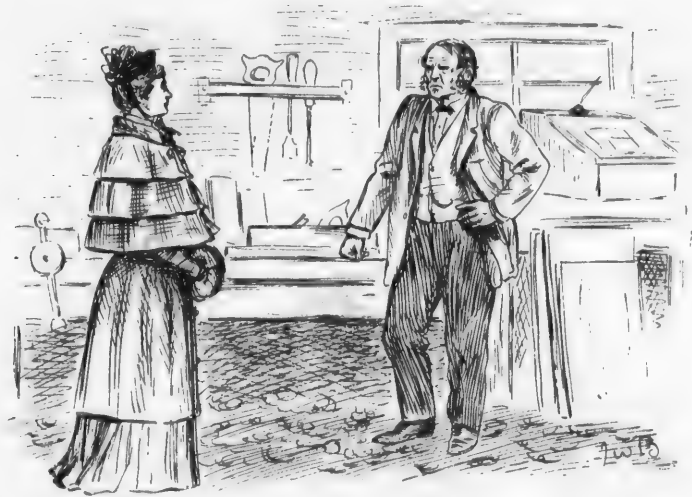
"Yes," he answered, and placed a chair for me near the little window.

I was trembling, and my heart was beating fast. I had never gone on such an errand before.

"Mr. Fuller, I have come to talk with you about your son."

"Who has told you anything about him?" he asked quickly.

"I think everyone knows that he is away from home—and—the cause."



"Well," he said, crossly, "let everyone mind their own business, and I will mind mine."

"Do not be angry with me, Mr. Fuller. I am very fond of Marion, and know that she

feels intensely about her brother. Your wife, also, is slowly dying. Will you call the prodigal home ? ”

“ No,” he answered. “ It’s all very well to talk sentiment—that’s woman’s way. Tom is a disgrace to me. I’m not going to see his madness before my eyes every day.”

“ Mr. Fuller,” I asked, “ who taught your son to drink ? ”

“ He taught himself. I have never been drunk in my life—never ! ”

“ Have you not always kept wines in your house ? ” I asked.

“ Yes, and I intend to. I have drunk moderately all my life. I am not going to turn fanatic because Tom is a fool.”

“ I have heard, Mr. Fuller, that he was a clever boy, a good boy, until he became a slave to this habit.”

"I admit that," he said. "He was as fine a boy as any father would wish to own."

"Mr. Fuller, we who are strong ought to help the weak. When your son has learned to drink at your table—when he has fallen by a blow from his father's hand—it is your duty to help him rise again. God will hold you responsible for your son's downfall."

"How dare you come here and talk so to me," he said angrily. "I would not take it from a man."

"You do not know how hard it is for me," I answered, "but I am thinking of your son's peril."

"He has made his bed, let him lie on it."

"Won't you think of your wife and Marion?" I asked.

"Yes, it cuts me to see my wife fretting her life away, but I believe it would be worse for her to see Tom every day."

"Will you not call him home?" I asked again. "If he were to reform, would you allow him to come?"

"Yes; if he gives up drinking he may come."

"I forget," I said; "how can he reform at home? He will be tempted every day. It would be folly for him to come here. Home would be no better than a bar-room in which to reform."

Mr. Fuller pulled his whiskers, scratched his head, and looked angry.

"What would you have me do?"

"If I had a son," I answered, "who stood in such peril as yours, I would make any sacrifice for him. I would not send him wounded out in the world to die. I would take him to my heart; I would shield him as far as I could. Above all, I would put far away the accursed stuff that has wrought so

much evil. I know your pride is wounded, Mr. Fuller, and I am sorry for you, but your son's soul is wounded, and I am more sorry for him. Perhaps now, when his father has forsaken him, the Lord will take him up."

I left him standing in the door of his office, as I bade him "good-day." He did not speak nor take my offered hand, and I went home burdened with a sense of failure. I thought I was doing right to talk to him, but I had made a mistake.

I stood that night on the veranda. Looking up to Heaven, I asked God to forgive me, if I had done wrong. I did not dare to tell Solomon what I had done, lest he, too, should condemn me. My heart was heavy and sad as I went to my room, and it was the "wee sma'" hours before I fell asleep.

Under a Cloud.

NOT many weeks ago, one of the rare spirits of this little town of Stokedon called on me. She is a negress. She calls herself Missie Linkum, and her patrons and friends call her "Auntie."

I knew her first as my laundress, but as time went on I grew to love and reverence her as a child does a wise teacher. On the day she called I was sitting in my old chair sleeping. I had been busy all the morning canning berries, and when, in the afternoon, I sat down to read the *Stokedon Weekly News*, the soft, warm breeze was too much for

me. I was soon in dreamland—back to my childhood, wandering among the berry bushes on the farm, laughing and shouting as in the old days I was wont to do. I had just disturbed a large garter-snake from one of the bushes, and was screaming loudly for help, when I was aroused and brought back to the realities of life by a voice saying:

“Missie Wise-e-ky, I’s e in trouble.”

Aurtie Linkum had been in good repute until lately.

She is a member of Solomon’s church; her place has never been vacant in Father Moody’s class-room—that is, until lately.

Her hands have, for years, washed, clear-starched and ironed the linen of the professional men of Stokedon.

When the clergymen stand up in their respective pulpits every Sunday and present to the admiring gaze of their congregations

a display of spotless bands and ties, it is Auntie Linkum's glory that it is so.

The doctor's pleasant face looks doubly bright as he smiles above the snow-white linen on his neck.

The Stokedon lawyer tells her that when he goes abroad to plead a case, the opposing counsel grows green with envy when he beholds his white cuffs stretched forth in declamation—and she believes him.

She has received more compliments for her laundry-work than any lady in the town for her beauty or wit—until lately.

For years she has basked in popularity and has prospered. She has a tidy sun in the bank for rainy weather; while, spiritually, she and “de good Lawd are allus on de mountain-top a communin’.”

The townspeople have wondered at the serenity of her temper and the strength of her

faith. Their doors were open to her at all times; their children gathered around her when she came, to hear her quaint speech; their wives were kind, and always sent her home with a well-filled basket—until lately.

When she sat down, in answer to my invitation, she said again in a low voice :

“I’se in trouble, now, shuah enuff, Missie.”

She wiped the perspiration from her face, smoothed her white apron, and groaned.

I knew she was in trouble; at least I had heard the rumors that were floating through the air.

I have learned to despise “rumors.” They are ugly bats that fly around our heads in the dark. Sometimes they fasten on us and frighten us if we are weak or cowardly. When the daylight of fact appears and the sunshine of evidence pours on them, they cower and steal away, leaving faith in “public

opinion" weakened, but our own character strengthened. "Faith in ourselves," which was only a bud before, blossoms into a sturdy flower, and "Great Heart" walks with us the rest of our journey.

So I said to her: "Will you not tell me of your life, Auntie. I have often wished to know?"

"What you want to know 'bout my life foh, Missie?"

"I may be able to help you."

She shook her head.

"No, de debil got me now, shuah. De good Lawd's down on his poo' old sheep dis time."

"What is your real name?" I asked.

"Neber had no name. Down on de ole plantations dey called me jes' Dinah. Affer de wah, when dere war no mo' slaves, I call myself 'Harriet Beecher Stowe Lincoln.'"

"Your name, then, is Mrs. Lincoln?"

"Yah, Missie Linkum."

"Why did you choose that name?"

"Why?" she asked, "'cos dey sot us free. No better woman dan Missie Stowe; no bigger man dan Ab'm Linkum, nohow."

"Tell me of your slave life," I said.

"I dursn't." She pushed her sleeve up from her left arm, showing a long purple scar.

"What is that?"

"Where young Massa stabbed me, 'cos I sassed him. My back is full o' ridges where I was flogged. I had a bad temper, Missie, but it was made bad."

"Did you ever have any children?"

"Yah, two little boys?"

Her voice grew husky, and her dark eyes burned like fire.

"Dey sold 'em, Missie—neber seed 'em since. One of 'em died from a whippin';

t'other—little Mose—'dun know ; p'raps gone to kingdom come."

" I have been reading," I said, " that Mrs. Stowe was very much mistaken in her views of the slave-holders ; they were not all bad, Auntie ? "

" No, honey ; if dey had been de lightnin' would a come down from heben and burnt 'em up, same as it did Sodom and Go-to-morrow. Dere wus some good uns, chile, dat kep dere slaves on affer de wah, and paid 'em, and de niggahs wouldn't leave 'em.

" But, oh, Missie Wise-e-ky, de half isn't knowed of all de goin's on and doin's of de traders. But de good Lawd knows, and dere will be a reckonin' on dat day when He sits on His white frone."

" Were you ever sold in the slave-market ? " I asked.

" Yah, I was stood up on a block. Dey

pounded me an' pinched me, an' bet on me 'cos I was so strong and harndsome, Missie. Las' I was sold to Miss Eliza King. She kep' me till de wah."

"Why did you not stay with her?"

"She sold my chill'en, an' dat broke my heart. When she ask me to stay I tol' her I was goin' to de seashoah foh my health."

"Where have you been since, Auntie?"

"I worked in Brooklyn foh three years, den I came to Detroit. Dey tol' me dere was work in Stokedon, and I come. I've lived heah nigh onto twenty yeahs."

"How old are you?" I asked.

"Dunno; nobody neber kep' no count. I'm ole, Missie Wise-e-ky, and de good Lawd has forsook me."

"Where is your faith?"

"Clean gone."

"You were a poor slave," I said, "whipped

and degraded; your children were sold from you, yet you loved God."

"Yes," she cried, "Missie Stowe and Ab'm Linkum taught me."

"Now," I said, "you lose your faith in God because some one says you steal. Don't you think He can bring you out of this as He brought you out of slavery?"

"Dere ain't no Missie Stowe, no Ab'm Linkum, to sot me free."

"Yes, Auntie, promise me that you will be happy, and all will be well. Why, the whole town have been watching your faith. You have been teaching us all these years. Promise me."

She began to cry.

"You no' b'lieve I steal, Missie?"

"No, *no*. I believe in you with all my heart."

I kissed her on both cheeks.

"Dear Auntie, you are only under a cloud. Your good Lord will lift it in His own good time."

"I *will* trust Him, Missie," she sobbed, "though He break all my bones and tear my spirit in strings. I'll neber say again dat de good Lawd has forsook His chile. I'se been on de mount'in top a good long while a communin'; if He wants me to go troo de fiah and de watah wid Him, I'll go."

After she had gone, I went to Solomon's study and told him that something must be done to clear Auntie Linkum's character.

He closed the study door, and began to walk up and down the floor, as he does when he is troubled.

"Father Moody has been telling me that he thinks it would be wise to drop her name quietly from the class-book. He has been talking to her, but she would give him no answer."

"No wonder!" I cried, "when those who sat with her in the church have turned against her, and have believed that she could steal."

"Have you got any confession from her, Catherine?"

"There is none to get," I said. "She has promised not to lose heart, and I have promised to do all I can to find the real culprit."

He smiled on me.

"You are very Quixotic, but you will not have to go far. She has been seen at night creeping in and out of her neighbors' henneries."

"Who has seen her?"

"Some man Ward, who lives on the same street."

"How did he come to be up at night watching his neighbors' henneries?"

"Public opinion is strongly against her. I

think the best thing is to drop her name from the church book."

"O Solomon!" I cried, "I thought you were good and strong and true. Don't leave this poor woman till you have done all you can. Has anyone else seen her?"

"Yes, several have seen her, late at night, going through the back streets."

"If the people think she has stolen, why do they not have her tried for theft?"

"She has been so popular, and she is so old, that they dislike doing it."

"Will you do one thing?" I asked, "before you give up, before you blot her name from the class-book?"

"What do you want me to do?"

"Let a detective be employed to watch secretly for one week, then we shall see."

He promised, and I returned to my chair and the *Weekly News*.

‘ ‘ ‘ ‘ ‘ ‘ ‘ ‘ ‘ ‘

Three days after, Auntie Linkum came to me with her old-time happy face. I was tying up one of the vines at the end of the veranda when I heard her voice crooning up the street—

“Sound de loud timbril
O'er Egypt's dark sea;
Jehovah hab triumphed,
His people am free.”

I ran to meet her. “What is it?” I asked.

“De good Lawd hasn't forsook His chile. I'se glad I promised before not to mistrust Him.”

“Tell me,” I demanded, “what has happened?”

Low ripples of laughter came from her heart and shook her body.

“He was dressed in ole woman's clothes—shuah—he didn't look no mo' like me dan I do like you, Missie Wise-e-ky. He'll not



AUNTIE LINKUM.

steal no mo' chickens," and she laughed so cheerily that Solomon heard her and came out.

"The real culprit has been found," I said.

"Yah, an' I came heah first to tell my ministah," she said proudly. "Mr. Ward has been perscivered, sah, an' taken to de jail."

Solomon looked surprised.

"And you, Mrs. Linkum?" he asked.

"No, sah, I'm not a thief, sah. Praise de Lawd, He's cleared me."

Solomon took her by the hand, led her into the parlor, and shut the door.

I did not intrude, for I knew he was humbling himself before this daughter of the King.

When she came out, her eyes were shining.

"Dat's a good man, Missie," she said; "he'll walk in white on de top o' Mount Zion. De good Lawd bress him and cause His face to shine down on him!"

Thus the cloud was lifted from Harriet Beecher Stowe Lincoln. Her last days are likely to be her best, for old and young vie with each other in atoning for their unjust suspicion.

Yesterday I met her, and she said, "I don't lean on an arm o' flesh any moah, honey—'taint no good—only on de strong arm ob de livin' God."

Joy in the Morning.

THURSDAY was the day of my weekly baking. I was taking some pies out of the oven, when Marion Fuller entered.

"I came right to the kitchen, Mrs. Wise-acre; I could not wait."

"Well," I cried, "you must wait. My fingers are getting beautifully burnt."

She helped me, then I wiped the flour from my hands and took her to the veranda.

"Now," I said, "I shall rest, and you will tell me your news."

"I could scarcely wait to get my breakfast, I was so eager to let you know."

"What is your good news?" I asked.

"I have a letter from Tom. May I read it to you?"

"Yes, my dear, if you will."

She took it from her bag and read (I could see withered places on the paper, where her tears of joy had dropped and dried):

"MY DEAR SISTER,—I have been very sick with fever. The people here have been kind, and I am better.

"I want to tell you, Marion, that I am changed. A good old man used to come and sit with me when I was down. He read to me from the Bible, and sang the hymns that I have often ridiculed. He was like a father to me. When I got better, he came to me one day and said, 'See here, my boy, I can't let you go out in the world again with no stronger arm than your own to lean on. I want you to take Christ for your Saviour.'

"I told him I was too weak where drink was concerned to ever be strong, no matter what help I got.

"'Have you ever tried Christ?' he asked me. I said I never had.

"Then he told me his story—how he used to lie in the gutter all night ; how the landlord kicked him out of the bar-room when he had drunk all he could hold ; how his wife went in rags and his children were always hungry. At last he was taken by a woman to a meeting, where he signed the pledge. He kept it for a week, then fell. One day, an old minister took him to his study, and told him if he gave his heart to God it would be an easy matter to give up drinking. He knelt with the minister and they both prayed, until strength came to him that he never had before. From that time he drank no more.

"I told him if there was any such power I should be glad of it, for I was a disgrace to you all. Then and there the old man—God bless him!—prayed. We did not rise from our knees till I felt the same power come to me—felt that I could conquer through Christ.

"This is all I have to write, Marion. I should like to see you and mother, if father could bear me around. Tell him I don't blame him for turning me away, I hope to be a better son in the future."

Marion folded her letter. "I have something else to tell you, Mrs. Wiseacre. Of course I gave father the letter. He said nothing when he had finished reading it, but



last night I was wakened by strange muffled noises in the cellar. I slipped on a wrapper and went down to see what was the matter. Father was emptying his ale and wine into a

bucket. I ran away, for I knew he would not like me to see him. This morning he had all the bottles and kegs carted away, and our house is free from the horrible stuff. I have written to Tom to come home. Mother is like another woman. What are you crying for, Mrs. Wiseacre ? ”

“ I am so glad,” I said—“ glad for you and your mother, but gladdest of all because Tom is coming home, and your father has put the evil thing from his house.”

.
The next Sunday morning I stood on the veranda, drawing on my gloves, when Marion and Tom came up the street.

“ What a handsome boy ! ” I thought ; “ no wonder your mother was breaking her heart for you.”

“ My brother,” said Marion, as she drew near.



“My dear boy, I am so glad to see you. Won’t you call Mr. Wiseacre ; he will be late for the service.”

“Where shall I go ?” he asked.

“Upstairs,” I answered. “You will find him in one of the rooms. If he is talking to the ceiling or furniture, do not be alarmed. It is a habit of great men.”

He ran laughing up the stairs. In a few minutes they came down together. I do not think I ever loved Solomon so much. His eyes shone as he gave me a smile, which said, “Satan is cheated ; one more soul for God.”

I never heard him preach such a sermon as that morning. His voice trembled as he told of the joy in heaven when a soul decides for God.

We all broke down and cried, not so much at Solomon's words as because Tom Fuller was sitting by his mother, clothed and in his right mind.

A thousand blessings on the good old man who went to him in his sickness! We, his friends, stood aloof from him like Pharisees, holding our garments away from his polluted touch. This good man went down to him, bound up his wounds, and sent him on his way—healed.

"I was sick and ye visited me." Yes, he
"shall shine as the stars forever and ever."

A Supply.

SOLOMON had been invited to preach in a neighboring town. He accepted the invitation gladly, as it came from one of his old circuits.

Armed with two of his best sermons he departed, leaving me to entertain his "supply," who was a young graduate and divinity student.

I never looked so old as when I stood before the little glass in the hall-rack and gave a final touch to my hair before the 'bus should come. There were many grey hairs in my head; there were wrinkles under my eyes and

across my forehead, while little eddies rippled around the corners of my mouth.

I try to be stoical, but somehow I do feel sad when I put my glasses on and see that I



am growing old. Not really old, but on the borderland. I can stretch my left hand back to the young, and say, "I know—I have been there—it is delightful." I can reach my right

hand to the aged and call, "Wait, I am coming." The best of all is, young, middle-aged and old are marching hand-in-hand to a land where youth sings forever.

While I was looking at myself in the little rack-mirror the 'bus arrived, and my guest came up the walk. I knew his name, it was Rev. John Smith, B.A., B.D. Sometime in the future he would be an M.A. and D.D.

I almost trembled as I took his hand and ushered him into the parlor. He wore a fawn overcoat and lemon kids. His hat was in keeping with his coat. He was altogether nice.

"I am very dusty, Mrs. Wiseacre," he said, "and will be glad to go to my room."

I escorted him there, when—horrors! Carlo was soundly snoring in the centre of the bed, much mud and many burs clinging to him! Freddie was also lying by him, his curly head resting on the dog's back.

I was speechless. What a prospect for the titled divinity student. I lifted Freddie from his resting-place. Carlo, who knew that he was trespassing, fled precipitately. I was going despairingly from the room, Freddie's hand in mine, when Mr. Smith asked :

"You are not going to punish the little fellow? Don't, please; I do not object to little boys and dogs as companions."

He took an orange from his valise and gave it to Freddie, who ran away, well pleased. That was the way I came to know my guest.

When tea was over and the spare bed freshly spread, the cloud disappeared from the domestic sky.

In the evening we went to the veranda. It was warm and the air was delightfully refreshing. He asked and I answered many questions concerning the town and its inhabitants.

"Does Mr. Wiseacre ever read his sermons to you?" he questioned, cautiously.

"He used to," I answered, "when we were first married. I think that custom departs with the honeymoon."

"Why should it?" he asked.

"For various reasons. I think my husband found that I was not an oracle of wisdom, as he had fondly hoped. I had a silly, irritating fashion, which I could not wholly conquer, of giggling at the most solemn and tragic passages."

Mr. Smith looked puzzled and slightly disgusted.

"I must be truthful," I said. "When Mr. Wiseacre came to rehearse the latter part of his sermon, his hair standing up in sympathy with his ideas, his eyes rolling at me as though I were the chief of sinners—I?—cuddled up in a chair with my embroidery,

trying my best to take in the situation—the truth *must* be told—I invariably laughed, and was turned out of the study in disgrace.

“After a few years, when I became a soberer and wiser woman, I often took one of the children to the study and begged my husband to read to me. He always said, ‘Wait till that child is asleep;’ then I was too tired myself to care. The custom has fallen into disuse, and I am not sorry.”

“May I read you my sermon?” he asked.

“Yes, if you do not read too loudly.”

“I heard that your people were very intelligent,” he said, “so I have chosen my most thoughtful sermons.”

He began to read and I to listen.

He had a musical voice and read well. His thoughts were deep and high. They were clothed in deep and high language—so deep

that I could not fathom, so high that I could not reach them.

When he had finished he said: "I want you to give me an honest opinion of my style."

"Why," I asked, "do you want my opinion? I am only a very ordinary woman."

He paused, then said in a low voice: "Mrs. Wiseacre, I have been preaching three years, and I do not think I have converted one soul. I have been thinking lately that perhaps the fault is in my style. If I cannot solve the mystery I must give up. It is a burden I cannot bear. I sometimes think that higher education is not necessary to save souls—the more ignorant we are the better."

"If I were your mother," I said, "I should box your ears."

He looked shocked.

"I mean your mental ears. If I were your

chairman, I would put you back to learn first principles."

"You speak bluntly," he said.

"Pardon me, but you asked me to be honest with you. You know that any man, however ignorant, may lead a soul to Christ, if he know the way himself; but is any education too high, any knowledge useless, that helps us to make rough places smooth, dark places plain? If science unfolds the ways of God, is it not a servant of God? If education leads us heavenward, can we climb too high?

"Let me be truly honest with you.

"In your audience to-morrow you will have tired, sorrowful people; you will have giddy, thoughtless youth; there will be women whose loved ones are going astray; there will be old people who are tired of life; there will be disobedient children and hard, unrelenting fathers. Preach to them, Mr. Smith, as

though God had given you one message and you would deliver it. Forget about the 'ologies and 'isms; forget that you ever read Kant and Strauss. Only remember that this great world has one great need—a Saviour.

“There is a poor little hunchback, Tim Giles, who is sure to be there. He cannot see why God should make him crooked and others straight. He suffers much agony of spirit and is very wicked at times. Give him a word of hope and comfort.”

“Shall I not preach this sermon?” he asked.

“I cannot decide, Mr. Smith; only, give thought that will lift your hearers above the cares of the world, that will help the weak to be strong and the sad to be joyful.”

“I asked your opinion,” he said, “and you have given it. I had a thought that you might be pleased with my style, and perhaps

give me a little flattery. If you will excuse me, I will go to my room for the night."

"Good-night," I responded, "and don't forget that I need reproof and help."

The next morning there was a large audience to hear the young B.A.

He preached thirty minutes, from the text, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Only thirty minutes, yet I received my reproof and help.

Tim Giles listened intently. After the service I went to speak to him and saw Mr. Smith coming on the same errand. He shook his hand and spoke kindly to him.

"Tim," I said, "I would like you to come home with us to dinner; you have never visited me yet. Come."

"Me!" he cried, "to visit you?"

"Yes," I laughed; "come, dearie; Mr.

Smith wants you, and Arthur. I want you, too—come!”

While I was getting dinner I could hear Tim laughing at something Mr. Smith told them; then I heard them singing together.

In the afternoon Mr. Smith and Tim went for a walk. I knew they were going to a little grove where Tim often spent his dark hours.

When the evening service was over, I carried a cup of coffee to the veranda.

“Are you tired?” I asked my guest.

“No, not tired, and so thankful that I shall not leave the ministry. I have had a convert to-day.”

“Is it Tim Giles?”

“Yes; we had a long talk in the grove. We prayed, and God heard us.”

“You did the work I could not do,” I said.
“I have often talked to him, but he always

answered: 'God made your little boys straight; you don't know anything about it.' "

"Poor little fellow!" he said, "he is my



first spiritual child. I have found that he is very fond of music, and I intend to educate him, to make him a musician. Can you help me, Mrs. Wiseacre?"

"We have a good teacher," I answered. "His father is very poor, but he may practise on my piano."

"Will you allow him?" he asked, his eyes shining. "We'll be co-workers, then."

He rose, went out on the lawn and lifted his face to the sky.

"This has been the best day of my life. I have brought a soul to Christ. Father, I thank Thee."

He stood with his head uncovered for a moment, then went to his room, leaving his coffee untouched.

When he went away the next morning we were all on the veranda to see him off. Tim was there; with a bouquet of golden-rod and ferns. When he was told of our plan for his education, he looked earnestly at his benefactor.

"Ministers ain't rich; you can't do it."

"Yes, I'll manage it. When I have a home of my own, you shall live with me, if your father will let you. When you become a professor, you may pay me. Is that a bargain?"

Tim assented joyfully.

His last words were: "Remember, you're *my* boy." And Tim answered: "I couldn't forget, sir."

He went away, the young divinity student, leaving a bright track of light behind him; many hearts blessed and made strong by his sermons, and one dark, rebellious soul lifted into the light!

N.B.—In a few years Tim will repay his friend. We have discovered that poor, neglected, deformed Tim Giles is a genius!

Only a Child.

WINTER has passed. Another spring is here. I am so glad to put my chair in its old place on the veranda. Nature has finished her house-cleaning. The snows of winter have melted and washed away all her impurities. She has put a fresh carpet of green on the earth; she has planted her flowers and fruits; her choir of birds are chanting and carolling in the trees; the scent of lilacs and apple-blossoms is in the air.

Why am I not happy? Why? There is a little grave in the cemetery; on the headstone is carved "FREDDIE."

He died when the snow was deep on the

earth. What is there to say of him, only that we loved him—that he was ours. He was often naughty, often wilful. He inherited the faults of his parents; but he was so sturdy, so loving—such a darling !

Now he is dead—buried—lost to us in this world ! Shall I see my child again ? Shall I clasp him in my arms ? Shall I look into his eyes and know that he is my child ? My heart is sore.

Solomon has been very patient, and the women have surrounded me with their love. Mrs. Whinely often comes to see me, and her soft, quiet ways are so restful. Dear Mrs. Moody takes me for drives in her old chaise. When I am with her I feel as though my mother had come back from Paradise to comfort me.

The doctor tells me I am too quiet. He says I sit and think too much ; I must be

roused. He does not understand. I only want to feel that it is better for Freddie to be in heaven with God than on the earth with me.

I think my trouble is, I will persist in looking on this world as *home*. I cannot really believe that this is such a temporary, transitory life. I know, in time, I shall be glad that I have a child safely housed in the heavenly home—but not yet. I still feel the blank; I see his empty chair, his clothes and toys. These remind me of the sturdy little fellow who was so near, so dear.

Mrs. Taffety came in one afternoon. She told me that she wondered at my “fretting so long for a little child”—me, “a minister’s wife, and so well up in years.”

“Have you ever lost a child?” I asked.

“No,” she answered, “I always take a disease in time,”

"The doctor said that nothing could have saved Freddie."

"Nonsense!" she cried, "it is not the first time he has said the same. No, I have never



lost a child. There is no need of children dying if the disease is taken in time."

She went away, leaving a sting behind. How I shrink from her! How I dread to

meet her, lest another dart be driven into heart and brain!

The heavens and earth are beautiful, but the loveliest thing in heaven is my spirit-boy; the dearest spot on earth is the little grave in the cemetery.

N.B.—When I was writing, Solomon came quietly out and sat down by me.

“What are you doing?” he asked.

I handed him my paper.

He read it and laid it on my lap again. He looked very grave; his eyes blinked and his lips quivered.

“Katie, have you no love left for the other children?”

“What can you mean?” I asked.

“You act so,” he said. “I loved the boy,

but I try not to be selfish in my grief. Have you noticed that Nellie is not well? She eats scarcely anything. If she should die you might have something to regret."

He went away, and the cloud lifted. I saw how foolish was my grief, how precious my living children were!

Wherefore should I weep? The child is not dead, but in heaven. I will hold sacred my trust to those left.

In the evening, Arthur, Nellie and I went for a walk. We visited several stores. I stood treat while the children devoured ice-cream and cake. We came home laden with bags of oranges and sweetmeats.

The next day I sent out invitations for a children's party. I shall not spare any trouble. It shall be a merry time for them all. If I find it hard to keep back the tears for the

little boy gone, I know the good angel who lifted the cloud will help me to see him—not lying in the grave, but happy, far happier than we are. Yes, I know that *now* he is playing by the fountains and laughing in the sunshine of heaven.

Miss Primperty.

MISS PRIMPERTY was a maiden lady who lived in the town.

The people said of her: "She a is learned woman; she has studied Latin and mathematics; she is, of course, much superior to the ordinary woman who learns house-keeping and fancy work; if Miss Primperty had been young in the latter part of the nineteenth century, she would certainly have been an M.A. or LL.D.; what man could accomplish Miss Primperty could; she tolerated married women—only tolerated them; children were a general nuisance, while babies were her special abhorrence; if

Miss Primperty had been given a voice in peopling the earth, she would have decreed that only Sarah Primperty's should inhabit it.

This was what her neighbors said, but so did not I think. Mrs. Moody remembered that she was a sweet, lovable little girl. When she was nine years old her mother died, and her father took unto himself another wife. She cared nothing for Sarah, except as she was useful in taking care of her children. Her father, also, was indifferent to her, and she grew sullen and reserved.

When she was eighteen years old, a young man, John Mason, asked her hand in marriage. Her father, thinking him unworthy, refused his consent. Angry and disappointed, the young man left the country, and was not heard of again.

The years passed. Mr. Primperty died and left Sarah several hundred dollars. This she

spent in educating herself. She became a teacher, and for many years wrought in her profession. She at last retired to her native town, where she lived in seclusion.

She was not popular, but she was a good woman. The years of neglect and loneliness which had been her portion were largely to blame for her views. I liked her, and hoped that some day a strong but tender hand would break the crust that had grown over her heart, and let her little world see how worthy she was. I did not know the time was so near when the good work was to be done.

.

One day I was binding a coat for Solomon. It was an old one, but I hoped, after cleaning and trimming, it would look young again. The children were away for the afternoon. Solomon had gone to a wedding in the country.

While I was sewing it began to rain. I was gathering up my work to go in the house when Miss Primperty came up the street.

"May I take refuge here?" she asked.

"Yes," I answered, "come in and stay to tea. I am quite alone, and shall be so glad of your company."

When I assured her that Solomon and the children were away, she consented.

After tea she talked of books, of theology, and of politics. Suddenly the bell rang.

"Is the minister in?" a man enquired when I went to the door.

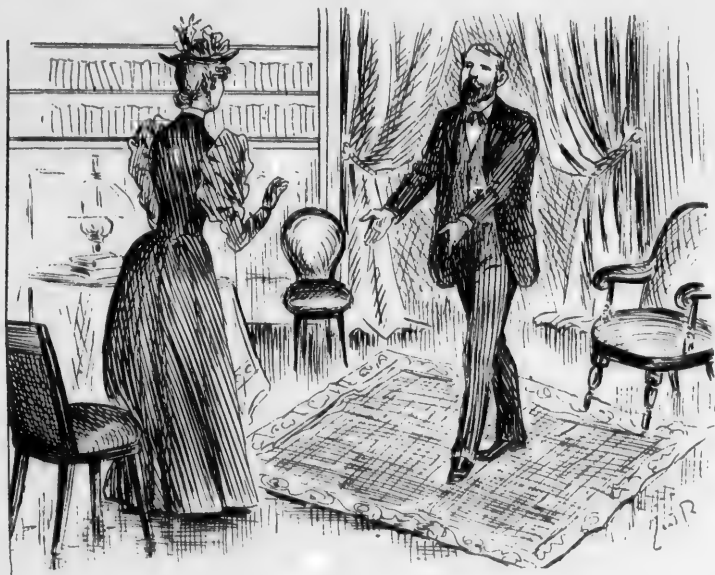
I told him he was not.

"Can you tell me whether anyone named Primperty lives in the town. I have been away twenty-five years."

He was a fine-looking man, about fifty

years of age. His hair was streaked with grey, and his eyes were keen and kindly.

"If you will come in," I said, "I may be able to answer. Miss Primperty is here."



I took him to the parlor, when, lo! Miss Primperty had fainted away.

I ran to get some water. When I returned John Mason (it was he) had his arm around

her and was trying in a most unusual way to restore her. I bathed her face with cologne, and gave her some water to drink.

She tried to recover her dignity and severity, but it was a failure. The crust was broken. Out of her eyes laughed her heart for very joy. I never noticed before how sweet her face was and how soft her voice.

When Solomon came I drew him into the dining-room and told him. I never heard him laugh so hard at any event. He ran into the kitchen, threw his arms around wildly, and nearly choked trying to keep from roaring out.

I said, "Solomon Wiseacre, are you beside yourself?"

"Miss Primperty got a beau! Ho, ho, ho! wonders will never cease!" and he went off again.

"Yes," I said, "I wish you were half as

good-looking. Don't stand there like a big boy. Come in."

When they had gone, Solomon confessed that John Mason was a "fine, sensible fellow." He also admitted that Miss Primperty looked better than he had ever seen her.

In a few weeks they were married in the parsonage. Marion and Tom Fuller were bridesmaid and groomsman.

Solomon was in such spirits! I am sure he chuckled when he was marrying them. He said he only coughed. I do not believe him. I have caught him in several small, white exaggerations. This is one of them.

Mr. and Mrs. Mason went away for a month. When they returned Miss Primperty had faded away, but a sweet, dignified woman was in her place. She really kissed Nellie and Arthur, and brought each a present.

She says she does not mind my little sketch, if it will teach women to keep their hearts warm and their lives bright when everything is against them. She admits now that "'Tis love that makes the world go round."

A Temperance Meeting.

I WONDER if I can sketch it? Sitting here in the sunshine can I reproduce it? It was so engraved on my mind that I can produce any number of copies—none, however, equal to the original.

I was afraid that Tom Fuller would yield to temptation. There were so many gins and snares, so many friends (?) waiting to be gracious—and he was so young. I grew ashamed of my fears as the time passed. We found that he was busy among his companions. More than one followed him. There was a leaven working among the young people which could only be accounted for by Tom's persistent efforts.

One day two young men came to the parsonage. They had formed a club, and were doing all they could to deaden the influence of the bar-rooms. They were going to hold a meeting in the "Hall," and Tom Fuller was



to be one of the speakers. At the close of the meeting the audience would be invited to sign the pledge. There was also to be a collection for a drunkard's family.

When the evening arrived the hall was crowded. Some came from curiosity, some

from love of the cause; but we were all there.

When Tom came forward, after the chairman's introduction, he was very pale. I knew he was not well, and that the energy spent in speaking to so large an audience would tax his strength.

Some of his words were so deeply stamped on my mind that, if I lived a hundred years, it would be impossible to forget them. This is a part of his speech, his first and last :

"MY FRIENDS,—One year ago I should not have believed that Tom Fuller would ever stand on a prohibition platform. I see some of my old friends. Are you sorry that I am here?"

"No, no!" they shouted.

"I see the proprietor of the 'Spider and Fly.' Are you sorry that I am here, my friend?"

"No," the man said, "I can't say as I am."

"I knew it. If their living was not in it—only for the money they make out of it—hotel-keepers would not keep a bar an hour.

"I am going to ask all the fathers and mothers in the audience who are glad to see me here to rise."

We all rose, and gave him such an ovation that the roof of the old hall echoed and re-echoed it back to us.

"My friends," Tom said, "no one is so glad as I am. My heart is full of joy. Nothing can make me sad, now that the chains are snapped which held me in such deadly thrall. I heard an old man say to-day, 'What do these temperance fanatics think they're going to accomplish against the governments, the aristocracy, and the mobocracy of the world? Man wants to drink,

that's the reason it's made and sold. Where there's a demand there's a supply.'

"I will take that man's words for my text—only I will speak against it.

"Several thousand years ago, a Philistine giant defied the armies of Israel. We remember his challenge to young David: 'Come, and I will give your flesh to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field.' We do not forget David's answer: 'You come to me with sword and spear and shield, but I come in the name of the Lord of hosts.'

"Prohibition stands young, ruddy and fair before this bloated, legalized giant—the Liquor Traffic. He has a strong arm and a sure eye. The spear of his foe is 'sarcasm,' his sword, 'the law.' "

"The Monster cries: 'What can you do

against the law, the social customs, and the demands of the people ? ’

“ Prohibition answers : ‘ You come to me with sneer and sarcasm, with the law, I come to you in the strength of God. I will drive this stone of Truth into your brain, and slay you with your own weapons.’ ”

“ Why is the prohibitionist able to make this strong assertion ? Because God is behind him ; because the evil is so great ; because the Bible—God’s word—curses the drunkard ? If the victim is doomed, how much deadlier blight shall fall on the maker and seller ? I would rather be the drunkard’s child, hungry and ragged, than the son of a man made rich by the drunkard’s money. Because the traffic is evil, because God hates it, we can say, ‘ We will destroy it.’ Do men want to drink ? If taught to like it they will want it, just as anyone taught to

drink tea or coffee will want it. *Habit* will prompt the demand. The taste for strong drink is not a natural but an acquired one. God has given us fruits, vegetables and grains. These are good, they feed the blood and brain. In a fermented state they excite, stimulate and destroy.

"Boys, you all know how I used to go ahead at school. I felt as though I could do any amount of work. No mental hill was too difficult for me to climb. Now I am a wreck. I know I shall not live long. I have exposed myself, when under the influence of drink, and laid the foundation of a disease which cannot be cured.

"I have a controversy with the liquor traffic. It has robbed me of health and life. It has robbed thousands of every hope and comfort. It has changed the husband into a brute and fiend. It has made the son a

disgrace and a curse. It has sent many a woman to the grave. It has turned thousands of paupers into the streets and highways, to fill our jails and asylums.

“Oh, you hideous, legalized giant demon! you are stalking through the world. Courts and governments pet and pamper you. Those whom you make rich hold their heads so high and cry, ‘Who shall say aught against *us*?’ You are gorged with the blood of your victims! Your footsteps are marked with blood! Your garments are rolled in blood! Ever and always around you sound the cries of the starving children, the moans of widows and the groans of lost souls.

“Friends, the day of freedom is dawning! I shall be dead—slain by the hand of this giant; thousands shall yet fall his victims; but the day of emancipation is coming for

the world, when the law shall sign the death-warrant of this destroyer of man.

“Boys, live for this day—fight for it; and in heaven we will rejoice together.”

Tom sat down, tired and breathless. When the people were asked to sign the pledge, the first to respond was Arthur. When the meeting closed many came forward to speak to Tom, but he was so tired that his father took him home.

Yes, I am afraid it is true. The giant has another victim, and his name is Tom Fuller.

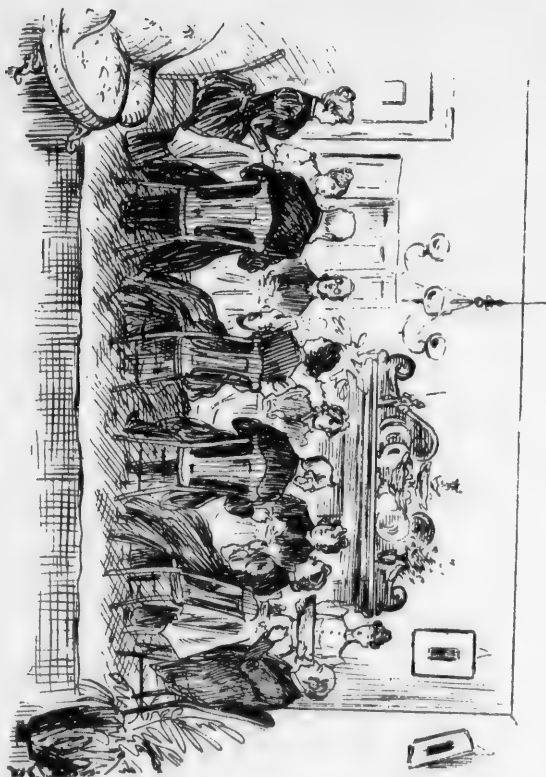
Thank God, he has only destroyed the body—his soul has escaped.

A Dinner Party.

WE have been to a dinner party, Solomon and I.

The "Elms" is a pretty home. Mr. and Mrs. Holt, the owners, are very hospitable. They make "evening parties," "at homes," and "dinners." The last are the most enjoyable. They never have more than eight diners, who are all kindred spirits. There is always a debate over the dessert, which aids digestion and relieves the stiffness which often attends a "dinner."

I was troubled about my dress. My silk was too old, so I arranged a "fichu" over



THE DINNER PARTY.

my black dress, got a pair of gloves, and was ready.

Solomon never troubles about his clothes. He says he never thinks of his looks, as we women do. I have a vivid remembrance of one occasion. He was to lecture before the "Humdrumological Society." His subject was "Evidences of Design in the Serpent and Hippopotamus."

I went upstairs softly, for I thought he must be studying deeply on such a difficult question. I paused at his door; when, lo! he had a hand-glass and was making all manner of faces at himself—smiling, half-closing his eyes, then springing them wide open, as in sudden surprise.

There he was, that wise man, actually posing!

Instead of despising him, I felt a deep sympathy with his desire to look his best. I

stole up behind him and laid my hand on his shoulder. I never saw him so angry before or since. He said he should have to get a key for his door, as he was never sure of privacy. It is such a sore subject that I never speak of it, except when he alludes to the vanity of women. Then I ask him when he is going to get that key.

He looked very well when we started for the Elms. I was brighter and happier than I had been for a long time, and was walking briskly by Solomon's side.

"Catherine," he said, "I do not think you will ever attain the dignity of a woman. You are approaching middle-age, but you still act like a girl. Walk slower, and try to cultivate a matronly air."

"What is a matronly air?" I asked. "Explain it to me, and I will do my best to cultivate it."

"No," he sighed, "it is too late; you are too old. You rush into conversation too impulsively. You enter a room so quickly that you create a draft. You laugh or giggle too much."

"I know it, Solomon, but I can't help it for the life of me. I have often imitated other women, hoping to improve myself, but in a day or two I am back to my own self again."

"Yes," he said, "I have long seen that it is natural. It is a blessed gift, is self-control."

"Be patient," I cried. "If you were dead I should never smile again."

"Nonsense, Katie. I do not want to find fault, but it would be better for us both if you were more dignified."

"Very well," I said, "I do not think I am too old to learn."

We came to the Elms, but my elation had fled.

"What a flimsy, foolish creature I am," I thought; "how mortified Solomon must be!"

Mrs. Holt received us graciously, and Mr. Holt took me out to dinner. The meats were well cooked, the pudding and pastry were delicious, but conversation flagged. The men tried to talk, tried to quarrel on some political question; but, after a few remarks, silence fell on them.

I was very quiet. How I envied Mrs. Holt as she sat so serene at the head of the table! If I could be like her how pleased Solomon would be! I firmly resolved, as I sat there, to imitate her in everything.

Suddenly, Mr. Reid, the Presbyterian minister, addressed me.

"I miss your genial words, Mrs. Wiseacre; are you not well?"

I glanced at Solomon, but he was absorbed in a piece of lemon pie, and did not seem to hear.

"We cannot always be genial, Mr. Reid," Mrs. Holt said sweetly. "We are glad to have Mrs. Wiseacre, whether she be grave or gay."

"Certainly," Mr. Reid assented, and a solemn silence followed. Mrs. Holt was getting nervous. She looked at me appealingly, and I forgot my resolve.

"Mr. Reid," I said, "I am going to atone for being so quiet. I have been thinking while sitting here that, if the same material food agrees so well with our bodies, surely God has decreed that one kind of spiritual food shall satisfy our souls."

"Ah," he asked, "how am I to understand your words?"

"If we, representing all the churches, can sit down at the same table, eat the same food, and be satisfied, why should we not eat spiritually at the same table? Why do we

not all worship and serve God together, as one people ? ”

“ No, no,” Mr. Reid said, “ we do not all eat the same food. I like meat, I see you do not ; Mr. Jones eats much bread, Mr. Wiseacre prefers pie ; Mr. Holt eats vegetables with his meat, Mrs. Holt relishes a roll.”

“ We are all at the same table,” I urged ;
“ all Mrs. Holt’s guests.”

“ We are all servants of Christ,” Mr. Jones remarked ; “ we are spiritually one fold.”

“ Then,” I said, “ the sheep should not quarrel so much over the grass. I cannot imagine sheep and lambs fighting as we fight over a doctrine. Either we are not sheep at all or the Bible has twenty creeds within its lids. If I were to command Mr. Jones to preach ‘ Infant Baptism,’ or force Mr. Reid to believe the Methodist doctrine of ‘ Con-

version'; if I insisted on Mr. Wiseacre preaching 'Predestination,' and coerced the rector into exchanging pulpits with the dissenters—what would follow? The shepherds and sheep would be flying at each others' throats, and where would our Christianity be?"

Mr. Jones nervously crumbled his bread. The rector adjusted his glasses. Solomon looked gloomily at me, as much as to say: "Too late; you're too old to mend." Mr. Reid looked positively bright.

"My dear Mrs. Wiseacre," he asked, "what would you do with Christianity? I confess we stand as a laughing-stock to infidels and heathens."

"If I had the power," I answered, "I would call a convention of the best minds and hearts. They should form a simple creed, from the Bible, of the essential doctrines of

Christianity. Then I would ask the world to join in one organization.

"How many would respond?" he asked. "Most people are satisfied with their own creed. You would be called a fanatic. Nothing would follow such action."

"Then," I said, "we should not call ourselves sheep and lambs, but goats—ugly, belligerent goats!"

They all laughed loudly. The rector readjusted his glasses and smiled benignantly. "You have a very dark view of the Christian world, madam."

"No," I said, "I have not, but we lack the one thing needful to win the world."

"What is that?" he asked.

"We do not love one another. We forget the prayer of Christ, and contend with each other as to who is the greatest and best."

The ice being broken, a lively talk followed

on the differences between the sects and the possibility of union. While they talked I could see that they were all self-sacrificing, honest men ; yet each clutched his little bone and gnawed it with relish, and clung to it. Far be it from me to take away the satisfaction each felt in possessing his particular bone. I knew, when the light of eternity dawned, the bone would be forgotten. How much better it would be, how much easier to overcome the prejudices of the heathen, if we could drop the bone now !

The dinner passed. When we separated, the rector expressed a hope that the time was near when we should all be one fold.

When we came home Solomon said, " I did wrong in speaking to you of your lack of self-control. In trying to be dignified you were stiff and awkward. Do not attempt it again."

" I do not intend," I cried. " I nearly

strangled trying to eat like Mrs. Holt. I shall just be my own small self."

Solomon sighed.

"My dear," I asked, "you admire gentle, dignified women. Why did you ask me to marry you? You knew what I was."

"Hush, Katie," he answered softly, as he laid his hand on my head. "I do not wish you to be different. It would be very lonely and monotonous if you were sweet and dignified."

Au Revoir.

TOM FULLER is dead. He has gone, we believe, to heaven. He was glad to go. He was afraid that sometime he might again fall under the influence of drink. Every day, for many weeks, I sat with his mother and Marion by his bedside and watched him fading away, going out of the world before his time.

I could not mourn, for I knew a strong, tender hand was leading him to the better land, where there are no wicked men, no foolish women, to tempt. God is merciful. Tom Fuller has not lived in vain.

It was about eleven o'clock one night that

a note was left at the door—"Come to us ; Tom is worse."

We locked the doors, left Carlo to guard the children, and hurried to Mr. Fuller's.

Yes, this was Tom's last night on the earth—his strength was gone.

"Pray that he may die quietly," sobbed Marion, "that he may not suffer."

"I have prayed for that many times," I said, "and may God's will be done."

His young friends had bidden him "good-bye" several days before. He had talked much with his mother and Marion, and had nothing now to do but conquer death and live forever !

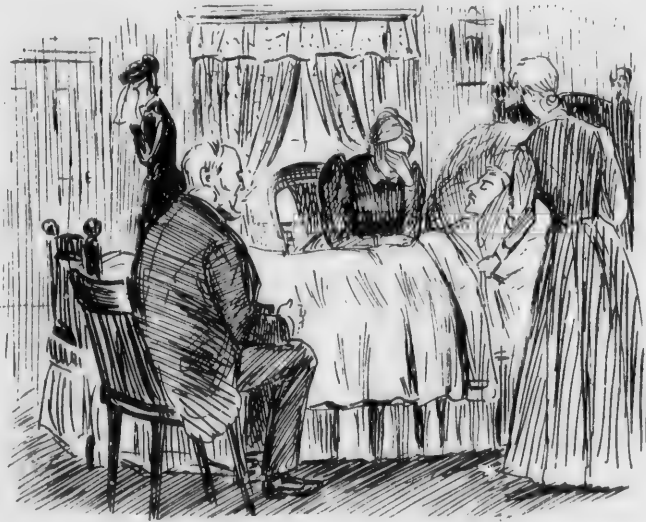
We sat and waited through the night, silently and prayerfully. As faint streaks of dawn came through the chinks of the shutters, Tom said :

"Open the window, I want to see the sky."

Solomon opened the shutters.

"Father, lift me higher." His father raised him on his pillow.

"Father, I have sinned against you ; I want to die in your arms." Mr. Fuller sat on



the side of the bed and lifted Tom until his head rested on his breast.

"Father, you—gave—up—your wine—for my—sake. God—will—reward—you." His father bent and kissed his forehead.

“Mother,”—his hand groped feebly for hers
—“I’ll—wait—for you.”

His mother answered, “God grant it may
not be long, my son.”

“Marion, work, work—much—for God.”

Then his eyes wandered to me, and he
smiled. “I’ll tell Freddie.”

His voice failed. He smiled when we
spoke to him, but no words came. After an
hour of perfect quiet, he started from his
father’s arms, while light from heaven shone
on his face.

“They are coming, the angels, coming in
troops! There is nothing to conquer; there
is no death! Victory! victory!” And his
spirit fled.

We were left in the darkness and storm;
he was in the eternal sunshine with Freddie.

Mr. Fuller fell on his knees and cried,
“God, be merciful to me, a sinner.” We all

knelt, and Solomon prayed until a great calm fell on us all—a deep joy, born of Tom's safety.

The funeral was large. Many tears were shed. His companions, with white ribbons on their breasts, carried Tom to the grave. All were sad, yet I do not think one of his friends wished him back. They saw the smoke of the distillery, they saw the bar-rooms in the six hotels of the town, and they knew it was better that Tom Fuller should be in heaven.

I want to record now, over the grave of that bright, talented boy, my undying horror of the liquor traffic. I vow to do all I can to destroy its influence. Yet, what can I, a woman, do? The chains of the law are round my feet, tripping me when I would take a bold step. The sneers of those who make and those who sell it fill the air. The people who hate it are weak. They are not

wise, they are not mighty. They are only as little David going out to meet Goliath. Is God behind us? Why does He not come to our help? When will He stretch forth His hand and cast down this evil?

I look up to the sky. There is no reply. I ask the saloon-keepers and the distillers. They laugh and answer, "Never!" I ask the legislators. They do not know.

I remember Tom's last words to the people: "I shall be dead—slain by this giant; thousands shall fall his victims; but the day is coming! Live for it—fight for it; and in heaven we will rejoice together."

Many will live for it, because you made such a brave fight at last and conquered. Rest thee, Tom Fuller! Rest thee, little Freddie! When Sin has been chained and cast into hell—when the mists of time are lifted—we *will rejoice together*.

Parting.

OUR boxes are packed. We have said good-bye to the people. To-morrow morning we take the early train for our new station.

There was a farewell social in the church last night. Solomon and I were given two chairs and an address. Jacob Whinely read the address and Father Moody presented the chairs.

Jacob Whinely has been very kind to us since he was sick. Solomon visited him often and won his heart. He does not talk any more of going to the poorhouse. I think he has given up the idea. His wife is much brighter.



THE PRESENTATION.

The people say she is getting young again. His children have all joined the Church. The boys were influenced very much by Tom Fuller. I am so glad that it was not necessary for Jacob Whinely to die in order that his family should be happy.

It was hard to say good-bye to Mrs. Moody. Shall I ever forget her? Never. Her sweet old face will come often to cheer me when I am among strangers. Her words of counsel can never die. Her last words to me were, "My dear, try to please God, and you'll be sure to please the people."

Ah, she knew my besetting sin! Always thinking of men and women more than of Him. I shall try to remember.

Marion Fuller came and sat with me an hour this afternoon. Her mother died two months ago. Her wish was granted. Marion is very lonely. Her father goes to his office

every morning. He attends to his business with his usual faithfulness, but he is so strangely quiet that Marion is troubled. She has persuaded him to go with her to the seaside for the summer months.

"I shall devote myself to my father while he lives," she said; "then, if I am young enough, I shall offer myself for mission work."

"No, dear," I said, "you will marry. Only let him be worthy. Do not give yourself to a second or a third-rate man, be he a millionaire."

She smiled. "Thank you for your opinion of me, but I have no such thought. My mother's life and death have been too much for me. I would like to decrease the sin and misery of the world. I have long wished to be a missionary. Now that mamma is gone, of course, my duty is with my father."

So we parted on the old veranda. God

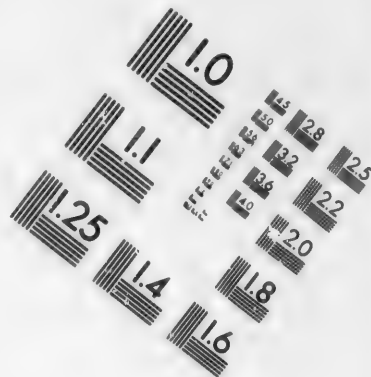
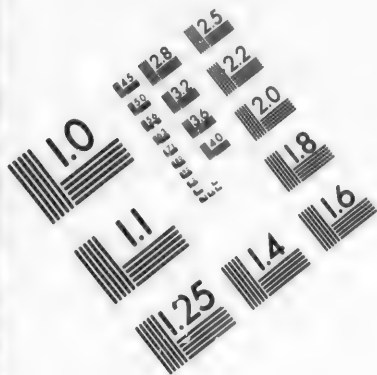
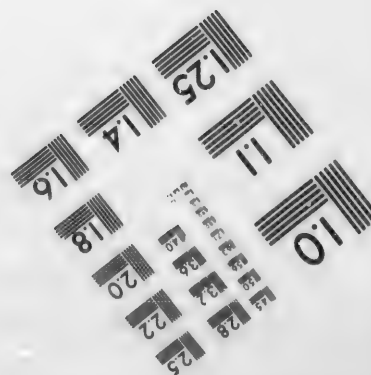
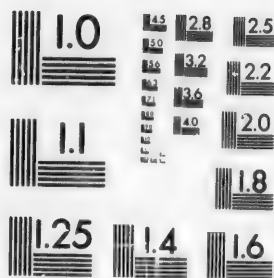


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bless thee, brave Marion Fuller! Whether thou livest quietly at home, making bright thy father's last days; or, taking Christ's message, goest forth to teach benighted ones the way of Life—thou shalt be blest!

The moon is shining in calm majesty. Her children, the stars, are laughing and twinkling around her. Earth's children are sleeping, carousing and suffering.

I am still writing in the moonlight. I am so glad we have lived here—so happy that we have known all these good, heroic, sweet characters. We need not read novels to find heroes. They are living all around us. We are talking to them every day. They pass us on the street, they sit by us in church and hall. There is no historian to write of them. Only a book of remembrance in heaven, where all their good deeds are recorded.

Good-bye, old veranda ! May you afford a resting-place for many tired feet ! Good-bye, good and true hearts, who have given to us a friendly hand and looked on us with loving eyes. We go to a new place, to new faces and new hearts. Will they be as kind as you have been ? Will they be blind to our faults, and see only our excellences ? Will we do much good there ? Will Solomon have souls for his hire ? Will death meet us there as it has here ? Will our sky be bright ?

I cannot tell. I only know that God will be there, heaven will be above us and whitened fields around. Is not that enough ? Yea, verily. Good-bye, honest hearts and true ! God with us, God with you, we shall not live apart.

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